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RESEARCHING COAL MINERS

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 218 JUNE 2024

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The scandalous story of 18th-century prostitution

My grandmother hid the truth of her tangled love life

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CLIVE MYRIE

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Welcome

Sarah's Top Tip

Names are far from being fixed, so be flexible if you can't find someone

Chloe O'Shea's tips for name changes on **page 19** focus on surnames, but David Annal's answer to a reader's question on **page 43** shows that first names can also shift, although usually to a lesser extent. Registered as an Ellen, baptised as an Eleanor but known by the family as Helena, it's no wonder Stephen Bone struggled to find his grandmother's birth certificate. This month's 'Q&A' section contains other examples of name changes, so it's definitely worth thinking about.

Q&A

Can you help me uncover the identity of Helena and Isabella's parents?

The lesson here is to allow for variant spellings of names in your searches

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Eighty years ago, thousands of young men from around the world risked their lives on what became known as D-Day. The invasion of Normandy by the Allies has gone down in the history books as one of the most significant and bloody moments of the Second World War. On **page 14** Gavin Mortimer pays tribute to the ordinary men who experienced an extraordinary event. Many of them did not survive to tell their stories, but we keep them alive in our hearts and in our family trees.

We also met up with journalist and presenter Clive Myrie (**page 23**) to talk about his family and his new TV series *Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure*. And if you have ever struggled with a family name that has multiple variations, you will enjoy Chloe O'Shea's discussion about surnames that change on **page 19**.

Also this month we explore coal miners' records on **page 32** in addition to a fascinating online genealogical collection from Ireland on **page 40**. I wish that my Irish kin were one of the families included in the Crosslés' research. It just goes to show how much we owe to the genealogists who have come before us.

Finally, I've got a few metalworkers in my family tree, so I've enjoyed exploring the websites mentioned on **page 37**. That's what we're here for: sharing ideas, resources and inspiration. Happy hunting!

Sarah

Sarah Williams Editor
sarah.williams@ourmedia.co.uk

Contributors

Gavin Mortimer
A writer and historian who specialises in wartime special forces, Gavin shares captivating stories from D-Day and advice for accessing the relevant records on **page 14**.

Chloe O'Shea
Chloe has loved family history since 2006, long before she made genealogy her career. Turn to **page 19** to read her explanation of the ways that surnames change over the years.

Laura Berry
Laura is one of the genealogists who help celebrities uncover their trees on *Who Do You Think You Are?*, and presents a guide to finding records of coal miners on **page 32**.

COVER IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES/A SECOND WORLD WAR BRITISH SOLDIER

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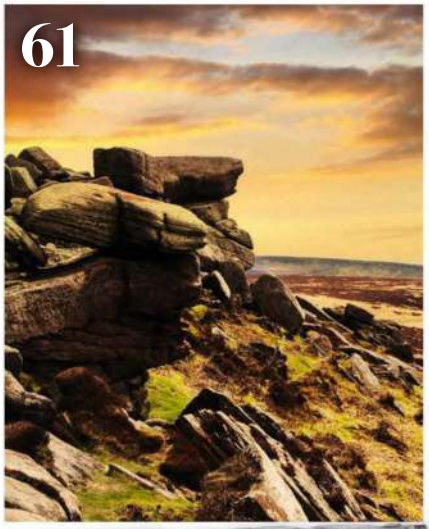

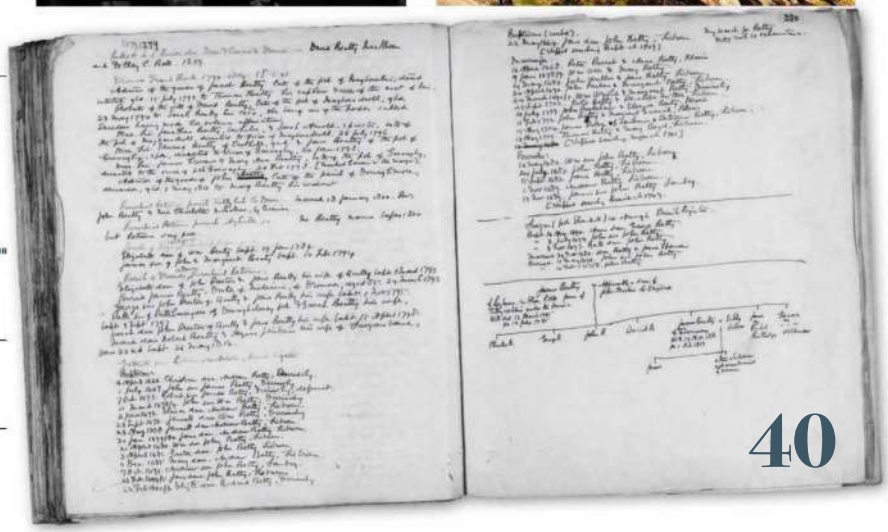

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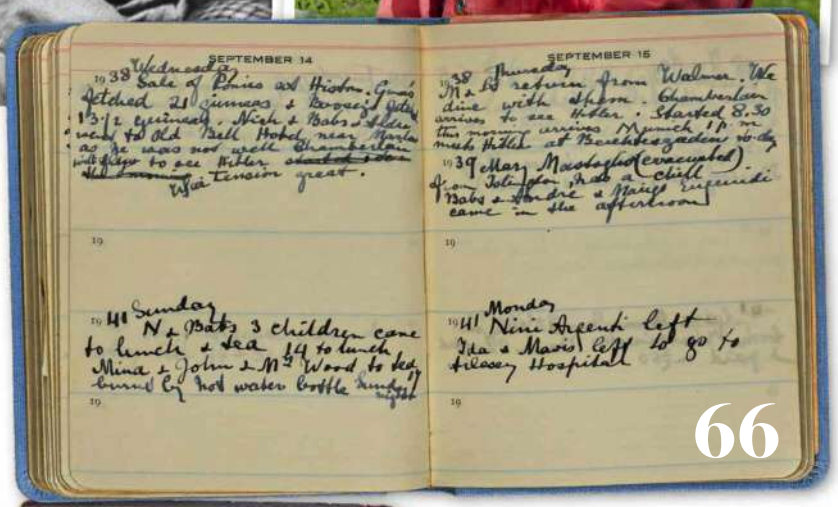

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Charity Begins At Home

STAR LETTER

In January 2020 you published Gail Dixon's 'Family Hero' article about Richard III being buried in the garden of my 12x great grandfather, Robert Herrick. Since then, I have been following Robert's line further back. His great grandfather was Thomas Bond, a wealthy draper in Coventry and mayor of the city in 1497/1498. When Thomas died in 1506, he left some of his money for the building of an almshouse. Today it is called Bond's Hospital, and in Thomas' own words, it "was to last for so long as the world shall endure". More than 500 years later, the almshouse and the charity running it are still going strong.

I contacted Bond's Hospital, and when the CEO learnt that I am a direct descendant of their founder, he asked me to visit, which I recently did with my dad. It was an extremely emotional – but wonderful – day. The trustees and staff were so welcoming. Apparently, the last known family connection to Bond's Hospital was in the mid-1500s through Thomas Bond's grandson, Thomas Bond junior (my 14x great grandfather). It is mind-boggling that my dad and I were the first descendants of the Bond family to visit in about 450 years!

Amanda has uncovered a link to Bond's Hospital and its founder Thomas Bond

I told them about my family connection to the Bond family and to Robert Herrick. They had no idea about their founder's connection to Robert and Richard III's grave. It created a lot of excitement.

They gave me a grand tour of the hospital, starting with the original building. As I looked around, I thought, "My ancestors walked these very same corridors." They took me to the boardroom that was built in the Victorian era, and I came face to face with a portrait of Thomas Bond!

In the old building, they showed me one of the original apartments, which is currently being refurbished, in addition to one of the modern apartments. It was great to see how Bond's Hospital and the charity running it have changed over time and expanded to help more people.

Thomas' legacy from over 500 years ago has helped countless generations

Over lunch, they surprised me with some wonderful gifts including a framed copy of Thomas' portrait *(pictured above)*.

Later I met some of the residents, who told me how happy they are there, with the security and friendship it gives them; they are one big, happy family.

It was a real honour and privilege to be invited to Bond's Hospital, and I thanked them profusely for all their hard work. It's amazing to think that Thomas Bond's legacy from over 500 years ago has helped countless generations of people over the centuries and is still going strong to this today, giving them a better quality of life and security in their later years. Knowing that I have Thomas and Robert's blood running through my veins, I couldn't be any prouder.

Amanda Webb, by email

Editor Replies **Many thanks for sharing this update Amanda. I wonder how many lives these two men have improved – both directly and indirectly – since they walked the Earth. If any other readers have found a relation to be proud of, we'd love to hear about it, so please drop us an email.**

Faversham, Nov. 11th, 1869.

FAVERSHAM AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION.—PLOUGHING MATCH AND DINNER.

The annual ploughing match and dinner under the auspices of the Faversham Agricultural Association took place on Wednesday last, and proved as successful if not more successful than any of their predecessors. The ploughing match was at Owen's Court, Selling, in the occupation of Messrs. T. and W. Butcher, and prizes being offered for steam as well as horse ploughing it was of an unusually attractive character. The weather, though cold, was fine, and a very large number of persons, including farmers from far and near, visited the ground.

The steam ploughing afforded one of the finest exhibitions of machinery that has, probably, ever been seen, the number of ploughs being larger and the combined power of the engines greater than has ever been known on an occasion of the kind, the united nominal power of the engines being upwards of 130-horse, though the actual power was equal to four times that amount. There were at work four sets of steam ploughing machinery on the double, and three on the single engine system. What is meant by "the double engine system" is that an engine stands at each end of the field and draws the plough to and fro, the engine itself moving for a fresh position as soon as the implement leaves it. The four double engine sets were sent by the following: No. 1, by Messrs. J. R. and A. D. Carling, of Yorkletts, Horshill; No. 2, by Messrs. Aveling and Porter, engineers, Rochester; No. 3, by Messrs. Fowler, engineers, of Leeds (Yorkshire); No. 4, by Mr. Thomas Chapman, of Chislett. Nos. 1, 2, and 4 were manufactured by Messrs. Aveling and Porter, and No. 3 by the exhibitors, Messrs. Fowler. Nos. 1, 2, and 4 worked successfully to the end of the trial, but No. 3 unfortunately came to a standstill when about half the work had been performed, through an accident arising from the engine driver allowing the water in the boiler to become too low. No. 1 (Messrs. Carling's) was a four furrow plough, working 9 inches deep, and did exceedingly good work. The other three were six furrow ploughs. No. 2 (managed by Messrs. Aveling and Porter's skilled men) ploughed 8 inches deep, and its work was very level. Of No. 3 nothing favourable can be said. Although it was managed by Messrs. Fowler's skilled men, the work was by no means well done, some of the furrows being not only deeper than others but very irregular, and had not an accident happened to one of the engines it could not possibly have stood any chance of gaining the prize. No. 4 was a similar set of machinery to Nos. 1 and 2, but like Messrs. Carling's was entirely managed by agricultural labourers. The furrows were eight inches deep, and the whole of the work was beautifully executed. We now come to the single engine sets, of which, as before stated, there were three. In each case the machinery was supplied by Messrs. Aveling and Porter. The engines were their own manufacture, but the windlasses were manufactured by Messrs. Howard, and the ploughs by Messrs. Fowler. In each instance Aveling and Porter's patent travelling rope was used, which obviates the necessity of a boy running to and fro with the plough, as is adopted in Messrs. Fowler's system. No. 1 was sent by Mr. Gillow, of Sandwich; No. 2, by Messrs. Blaxland and Martin, Faversham; and No. 3 by Mr. John Abbott, Ospringe. The whole of the work was excellently done. The Association offered two prizes of £7 10s. each, one for the best work made by a double engine plough, and the other for the best work made by a single engine plough. The judges were Messrs. F. Beard, of Horton Chapel, and H. Pye, of St. Mary's, Rochester, who carefully examined the work, and awarded the prizes to Mr. Chapman for the double, and to Mr. John Abbott, for the single engine ploughing.

In the horse ploughing three champion and twenty-two other ploughs (all four-horse) competed for the various prizes, the work done by each showing an unusual degree of excellence. There was also on the ground one of Messrs. Ransome and Sims' two-horse iron ploughs, which performed some capital work. The judges of the horse ploughing were Messrs. J. Morton, W. F. Harvey, and A. Solomon, who awarded the prizes as follows:—

FOUR HORSE PLOUGHS.

To the best ploughman with four horses, John Godden, in the employ of Mr. H. Collard, £3; his driver, John Monk, £1. Second, Henry Friaz, in the employ of Mr. Lewis Abbott, £2; his driver, John Prior, 15s. Third, W. Bourne, in the employ of Mr. Robt. Neame, £2; his driver, John Foster, 12s. 6d. Fourth, J. Harrison, in the employ of Mr. J. Abbott, £1; his driver, J. Harrison, 5s. Fifth, John Towner, in the employ of Mr. Baker Marton, 10s.; his driver, W. Tong, 2s. 6d. Sixth, Simpson Carey, in the employ of Mr. Thomas Butcher, 10s.; his driver. John Sampson, 2s. 6d. Seventh, Edward Hopkins, in the employ of Capt. Hilton, 10s.; his driver, Thomas Dray, 2s. 6d. Eighth, Thomas Kesler, in the employ of Mr. John Cobb, 10s.; his driver, J. Willson, 2s. 6d. The champion, T. Court, in the employ of Mr. A. Cobb, £2; his driver, Thomas Cole, 12s. (This premium is given by the Right Hon. Lord Harris.) The successful ploughmen, 2s. 6d. each; their drivers, 1s. 9 horse iron plough, from Ransome and Sims, an extra premium of 10s. to — Powell, driver and ploughman.

Lord Sondes was in attendance in the field and distributed the ploughing prizes to the successful competitors, to whom he addressed a few appropriate remarks. His Lordship called forth the man who had managed the two-horse plough, and congratulated him upon his work.

Messrs. Butcher provided an excellent luncheon at Owen's Court, and a large number of gentlemen partook of their hospitality.

THE DINNER

was held, as usual, in the Assembly Rooms, and a very numerous party of gentlemen sat down to partake of it. The President of the Association, Lord Sondes, took the chair, and amongst those present we noticed the following:—Major Pemberton, M.P., Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. G. W. Miles, M.P., Rev. C. E. Donne, Vicar of Faversham, the Mayor of Faversham (Walter Holmes, Esq.), Rev. G. B. Reynardson, Rev. J. H. Talbot, Rev. J. N. Viteland, Rev. A. S. Browne, Sir John F. Croft, Bart., J. L. Wildman, Esq., Pearce De Laune, Esq., W. E. Rigden, Esq., J. Tassell, Esq., S. G. Johnson, Esq.; Alderman C. Bryant; Councillors S. Higham, L. Sharsbools, and H. Stidolph; Captain Bathurst and Lieutenant Whittle; Messrs. P. Neame, C. Neame, jun., Richard Neame, Robert Neame, Percy Neame, Edward Neame, Edwin Neame, F. Neame, jun., T. Butcher, W. Butcher, A. Cobb, J. Cobb, F. Cobb, H. H. Read, I. Wildash, F. Beard, H. Rye, Allen Tassell, J. C. Alexander, T. Aveling, W. Marton, C. Marton, B.

RICHARD WEST

Prodigious Ploughing

The photograph of a ploughing competition in Nina Hoole's article about agricultural shows (April) was of particular interest to me, since my 3x great grandfather, John Godden, took part in the annual Four-horse Ploughing Competition run by the Faversham Association for the surrounding rural villages in the 1860s.

Local newspapers revealed that apart from the ploughing awards, prizes were given for Best Hop Management, Length of Service (one winner had worked on the same farm for 34 years), and those who sent their children to school for the most days of the year. The prize for the Ploughing Competition was £3 in 1869 when John Godden finally won.

The association's annual dinner was enjoyed by the dignitaries and the judges. The winners of the competition collected their prizes after the toasts and speeches were made. The position of women in society at that time is clear from the somewhat pompous remarks of one speaker: "Female labour is needed to a certain degree in the cultivation of the land." He continued, "Then again, female servants… are a most useful class," and he recommended to those who had daughters, "to get as many of them as possible into domestic service".

With a final toast to the "success of foxhunting", the event was over for another year and my 3x great grandfather went home delighted with his £3 winnings!

Beryl Stanley, by email

EDITOR REPLIES: **I love searching old newspapers online. Not only do they flesh out what our ancestors got up to but, as you say, they also shed light on society's attitudes at the time.**

Reivers Remembered

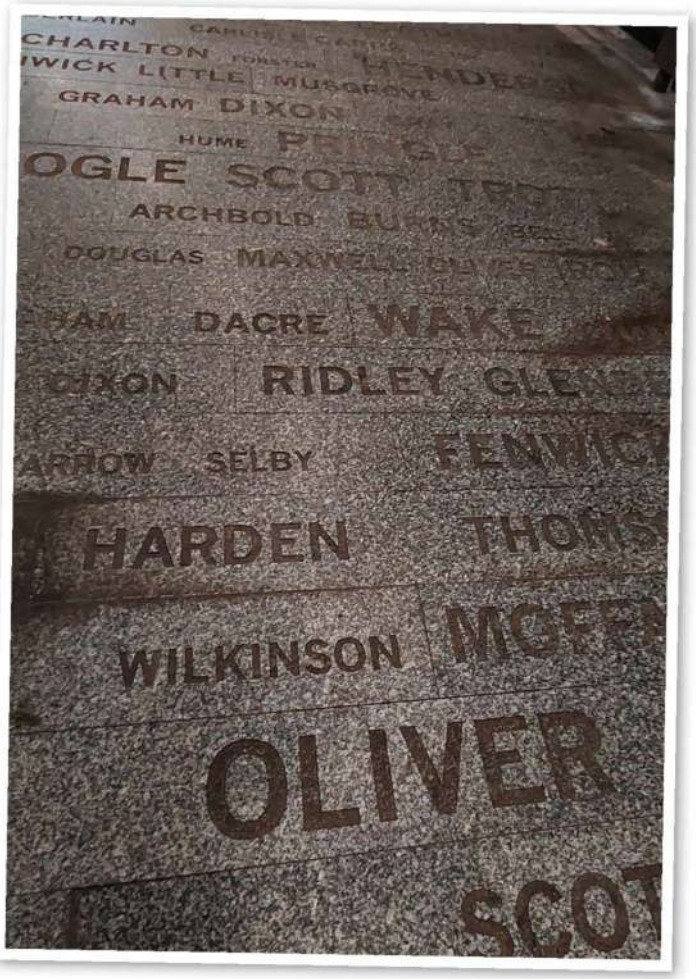
I enjoyed Gail Dixon's 'Reader Story' article (April) about the history of her area in Northumberland. Neighbouring Cumbria has a similar historical background. In the same issue, Jonathan Scott provided an informative 'Best Websites' article on researching surnames.

The history of the Border Reivers doesn't seem to be known by many outside the English–Scottish border region, yet is of great importance to both countries and family history researchers seeking information about the numerous Reiver surnames. Groups were mostly family-based and could be English, Scottish or a combination. They raided, plundered and stole items of value, principally livestock. Riding their small, powerful ponies (known as hobblers), and wearing steel bonnets and quilted leather jackets, they would attack at will.

Their years of terror lasted from about 1290 until after the enthronement of James VI of Scotland as James I of England in 1603. A commission was established to bring law and order to the area with the power of execution, banishment, conscription or transportation, and by the 1620s a more peaceful land existed. However, skirmishes still occurred including the stealing of church bells across the Solway Estuary in 1626.

Armstrong, Maxwell, Johnston, Graham, Bell, Scott, Nixon, Kerr, Dixon, Henderson and Robson are just some of the 70-plus surnames associated with Reiving families. The underpass in Carlisle between the castle and Tullie House Museum has all the known Reiver surnames carved into the footway *(pictured above)*.

Vicars were often targets for kidnap and ransom. 'Vicar towers' were sometimes added to churches as places of refuge. It wasn't unknown for some vicars to be involved in the reiving – the vicar of Bewcastle was in a gang that raided a family estate. ▶



Reivers' surnames are inscribed in the floor of this underpass in Carlisle

Jaime Rush commented on an article about tracing a forebear with DNA testing (tinyurl.com/wdytya-wilm)
My great great grandmother was such a mystery! I think I have pieced it all together, now just waiting for a DNA match to confirm what I have from the documents.

The Faversham Mercury mentioned Beryl's prizewinning 3x great grandfather on 13 November 1869

Marriage records in these areas, if they exist, may not match with actual marriage dates, since vicars had to travel in secrecy for fear of attack. They often hid their Bible under their clothing to avoid recognition, and were known as 'Book-a-Bosom priests'.

I hope Gail's story and this letter encourage other family historians to find out more about their Reiver relatives.
Richard West, by email

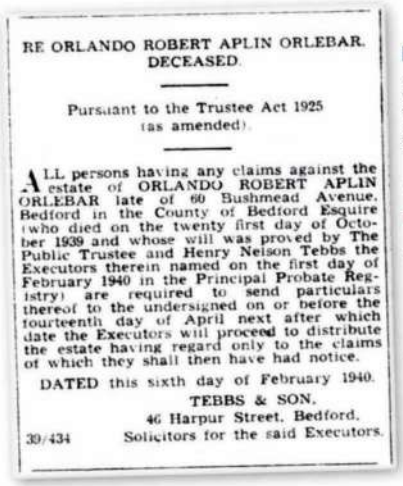
Editor Replies: Thank you, Richard, for sharing this fascinating insight into the history of the Borders. For more information, readers can visit borderreiverheritage.com.

Honouring The Dead

In Alan Crosby's 'Off the Record' article about Christian burials (March), he writes of "the fearful prospect of a pauper's funeral in an unmarked grave… We do not know where they lie, and we never will." The second sentence is not always true, as the sad story of Orlando Orlebar illustrates.

In 1921, the house in which I live was occupied by the Howard family and two lodgers, one of them the 62-year-old Orlando, unmarried and with no occupation. Intrigued by his name, I delved into his life only to discover from the censuses and electoral rolls that after leaving home in 1881, aged 21, he spent the next 68 years as a lodger in at least seven boarding houses, dying on 21 October 1939.

I searched Find a Grave (**findagrave.com**) and discovered that he had a plot in the cemetery of his home town. With the help of a 'Friend' of the cemetery, I found his unmarked grave. It looked like a case of a pauper's funeral – but it wasn't.



RE ORLANDO ROBERT APLIN ORLEBAR. DECEASED.

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 (as amended).

ALL persons having any claims against the estate of ORLANDO ROBERT APLIN ORLEBAR late of 60 Bushmead Avenue, Bedford in the County of Bedford Esquire (who died on the twenty first day of October 1939 and whose will was proved by The Public Trustee and Henry Nelson Tebbs the Executors therein named on the first day of February 1940 in the Principal Probate Registry) are required to send particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before the fourteenth day of April next after which date the Executors will proceed to distribute the estate having regard only to the claims of which they shall then have had notice.

DATED this sixth day of February 1940.

TEBBS & SON.
46 Harpur Street, Bedford.
Solicitors for the said Executors.

39/434

A notice in an old newspaper helped Derek research Orlando Orlebar's life

Orlando was a member of a distinguished local family – his father was an army officer. He may have been disabled, as two of the boarding houses in which he lived also had a 'sick nurse'.

He was far from being a pauper. The electoral rolls show that he owned "a freehold house and land". Probate records reveal that he left an estate of over £20,000, yet searching the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**) I found a solicitor's notice from 1940 indicating they were having difficulty tracking down legatees.

Posthumously, Orlando has two friends: myself and the 'Friend', who arranged for a simple cross to be erected on his plot. Not all unmarked graves are unrecorded. Some will be found, and some may eventually be marked.
Derek Turner, by email

Editor Replies: Glad to hear that you managed to find Orlando's final resting place, Derek, and that it's no longer unmarked.

Welsh Surnames

I have to take issue with the introduction to Jonathan Scott's 'Best Websites' article about surnames (April). In his comments about patronymic names, he wrote, "In Wales it was the custom to add 's' to the father's name." That is a gross misrepresentation.

In Welsh, the word for 'son of' is 'mab'. The Welsh language involves mutations, so it might be written as 'map'. Both were usually shortened – to 'ab' before names beginning with a vowel (eg ab Owain, ab Ifan) and 'ap' before names starting with a consonant (eg ap Hywel, ap Harri, ap Richard). Eventually the 'ab' and 'ap' disappeared; over time, elision resulted in the names becoming Bowen, Bevan, Powell, Parry, Prichard and so on.

Confusion resulting from patronymics continued into the 19th century.

In the 1841 census for Clynnog Fawr, the family name of my great great grandfather, Robert, was recorded correctly as Williams (son of William). However, his parents, William Thomas and Barbara Prichard (women kept their family name), were also recorded with the family name as Williams (incorrectly). I imagine one of the family knew enough English to try to correct the enumerator, which at least resulted in the addition of 'Tho' (Thomas) with the '/' symbol after William senior's first name, but he was still recorded with Williams as his family name. The enumerator must have been so confused!
Linda Dodimead, by email

Editor Replies: Sorry for the error and thanks for sharing this late use of patronymics.

@davidbartonmus responded to our online article on the Salvation Army's history: bit.ly/wdytya-sal
Some of my ancestors were involved with the @salvationarmyuk in Gloucester, being numbers 2 and 3 on the roll (number 1 was Mother Shephard, the founder).

YOUR LETTER IN PRINT We reserve the right to edit any letters sent to the magazine. Messages posted to our Facebook wall and tweets sent to us may also appear in print. The choice of Star Letter is the editor's and the prize is subject to change.

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What's On

Email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk* to feature your event here for free

PICK OF THE MONTH

Don't miss this Family History Federation event

FHF Really Useful Family History Show

15 June

a **King's Meadow Campus, University of Nottingham**
t 01263 824951
w **fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live**

The Family History Federation, which represents local family history societies throughout England and Wales, is holding three in-person events in 2024 to mark its 50th anniversary. The second show of the year, which is co-hosted with Nottinghamshire Family History Society, will take place on 15 June. There will be stalls from local societies, the opportunity to go on a guided tour of the University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections department (numbers are limited), and two talks. Martin McDowell will explain how to use DNA testing in family history, while Peter Swann will share his tips for tracing your ancestors beyond 1600. Free.

IN PERSON

Echoes Of The Blitz: Underground Shelters In Ukraine And London

Until spring 2025

a **London Transport Museum**
t 0343 222 5000
w **ltmuseum.co.uk/visit/museum-guide/echoes-blitz**

This exhibition compares photos of Londoners sheltering in the Underground during the Blitz and images of modern-day Ukrainians using underground train networks as a shelter during the war with Russia. Free, although you need to buy an Annual Pass to visit the museum (starting at £1 for those on Universal or Pension Credit).

Almost Within Living Memory – The 1921 Census

25 May

a **Manchester Central Library**
w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-1921-lt**

Leslie Turner explains how to access the 1921 census from Manchester Central Library for free, as well as relevant census substitutes. Free for members of Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society, otherwise £5.

The Enumerator Strikes Back

28 May

a **The Barn at Willesborough Windmill**
t 01227 495120
w **tinyurl.com/kfhs-enum**

WDYTYA? Magazine contributor Dave Annal sheds light on the enumerators who created the census returns we rely on. Free for Kent Family History Society members, £2 for non-members.

Book Fair

1 June

a **The Centre for Heritage & Family History, Reading Central Library**
t 0118 950 9553
w **tinyurl.com/berksfhs-book**

Berkshire Family History Society will be selling secondhand books at this event, chiefly related to family, local or social history. New titles, maps and data CDs will also be on sale. Free entry.

Show And Tell – The Lesser Known Records Of Warwickshire Quarter Sessions

12 June

a **Warwickshire County Record Office, Warwick**
t 01926 738959
w **tinyurl.com/wcro-show-tell**

Senior archivist Rob Eyre shares "archival curiosities" from Warwickshire County Record Office. Free, donations welcome.

The Devil's Dyke Story

12 June

a **Central United Reformed Church, Hove**
w **sfhg.uk/events/brighton-hove-meeting-centre**

At this Sussex Family History Group event Chris Horlock will discuss the history of Devil's Dyke, a dry valley on the South Downs, from days of legend to its Victorian heyday and the First World War. Free.

Family History Society Day

15 June

a **Central Community Centre, Swindon**
e *swindon@wiltshirefhs.co.uk*
w **tinyurl.com/wfhs-day-2024**

This Wiltshire Family History Society event offers the chance to consult experts from a range of family history societies, and purchase maps and books. Free.

Grand Family History Day

15 June

a **Liskeard Public Hall**
e *secretary@saltash-heritage.org.uk*
w **saltash-heritage.org.uk**

You can meet 25 family and local history organisations from Cornwall and South Devon at this event run by the South East Cornwall Museums' Forum. Free.

ONLINE

What Can My DNA Do For Me?

6 June

w **ihgs.ac.uk/tutorial-what-can-my-dna-do-for-me-1926**

Suitable for both genetics newcomers and intermediate DNA researchers, this tutorial from the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies sees genealogist Dr Sophie Kay explain how DNA testing can help your research and focuses on three benefits it can bring: validation, extension and connection. £10.

Using Discovery, The National Archives' Online Catalogue

7 June

w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-casta**

TNA's Sarah Castagnetti will share her expert advice for making the most of the archive's catalogue Discovery in this webinar. Free.

Hoots Man! There's A Moose Loose Aboot The Hoose! How To Carry Out A House History In Scotland

17 June

w **tinyurl.com/gwsfhs-hoo**

Join Lorna Kinnaird and the Glasgow and West of Scotland Family History Society in this Zoom presentation. Members only.

BOOK AHEAD

The Chalke History Festival returns in June

Chalke History Festival

24–30 June

a **Church Farm, Broad Chalke, Salisbury**
t 01722 781133
w **chalkefestival.com**

The UK's largest history festival returns with a programme of talks and discussions, historical reenactments, music, drama and more. Prices start at £20 for a day ticket.

News

Rosemary Collins reports on data releases and genealogy news

Study sheds new light on our ancestors' occupations

Britain was well on its way to becoming an industrialised economy in the 17th century – over 100 years before the Industrial Revolution began – according to the most detailed occupational history of a nation ever created.

The University of Cambridge's site Economies Past (**economiespast.org**), launched on 5 April, uses more than 160 million census, parish and probate records to track changes to the British labour force from the Elizabethan era to the eve of the First World War.

The website breaks down labour by sector, gender and age, revealing the extent of women's and children's participation in the workforce.

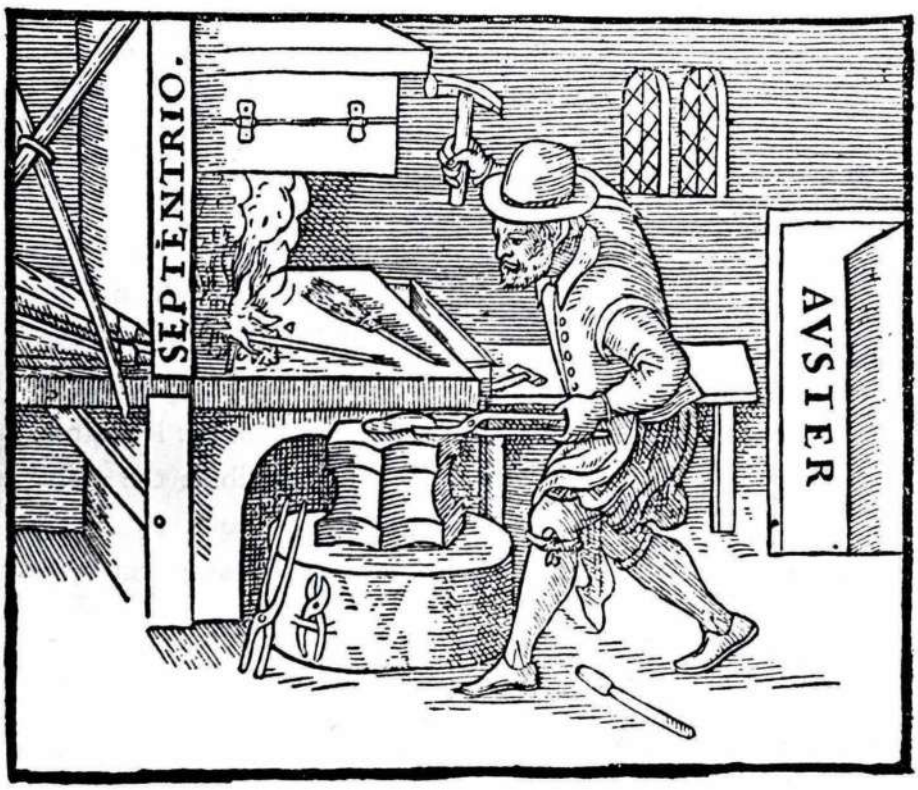
The research shows that 17th-century Britain saw a steep decline in agricultural peasantry and a surge in people who manufactured goods, usually in a small-scale way at home such as blacksmiths, shoemakers, wheelwrights and weavers.

Leigh Shaw-Taylor, project leader and professor of economic history at Cambridge's Faculty of History, said, "By cataloguing and mapping centuries of employment data, we can see that the story we tell ourselves about the history of Britain needs to be rewritten. We have discovered a shift towards employment in the making of goods that suggests Britain was already industrialising over a century before the Industrial Revolution."

Economies Past is the result of 'The Occupational Structure of Britain 1379–1911', a University of Cambridge research project that's been running for over 20 years and has gathered data from a variety of sources.

The main source of data for the period 1600–1800 is two million wills and probate inventories: lists of the movable goods of the deceased.

Alongside vast quantities of digitised census data, researchers also visited 80 record offices to gather data from an additional 2.5 million baptism records from the 19th century (in 1813 it became compulsory to record the occupation of the child's father).



Britain saw a surge in the number of people making goods in the 17th century, such as blacksmiths

The researchers found that between 1600 and 1740, the proportion of men in Britain working in agriculture fell from 64 per cent to 42 per cent, while the proportion who worked in goods production increased from 28 per cent to 42 per cent.

Parts of Britain, particularly the south and east, actually 'deindustrialised' during the course of the 18th century as manufacturing moved from small home workshops to large factories in the north of England, while workers in other parts of the country abandoned industries and returned to farm labour in rural locations.

For example, Norfolk was Britain's most industrialised county in the 17th century, with 63 per cent of adult men in industry by 1700.

However, the percentage dropped to 39 per cent during the 18th century, while the share of the male workforce in agriculture increased from 28 per cent to 51 per cent.

The researchers also found that Britain's service sector began growing earlier than the 20th century, contrary to what had previously been thought.

The 19th century saw the number of people working in jobs such as domestic servants, shop clerks, solicitors and teachers almost double.

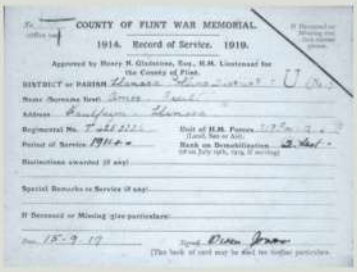
GETTY IMAGES

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prisoners on a transport ship to Australia

Old Scottish launches Scottish convicts database

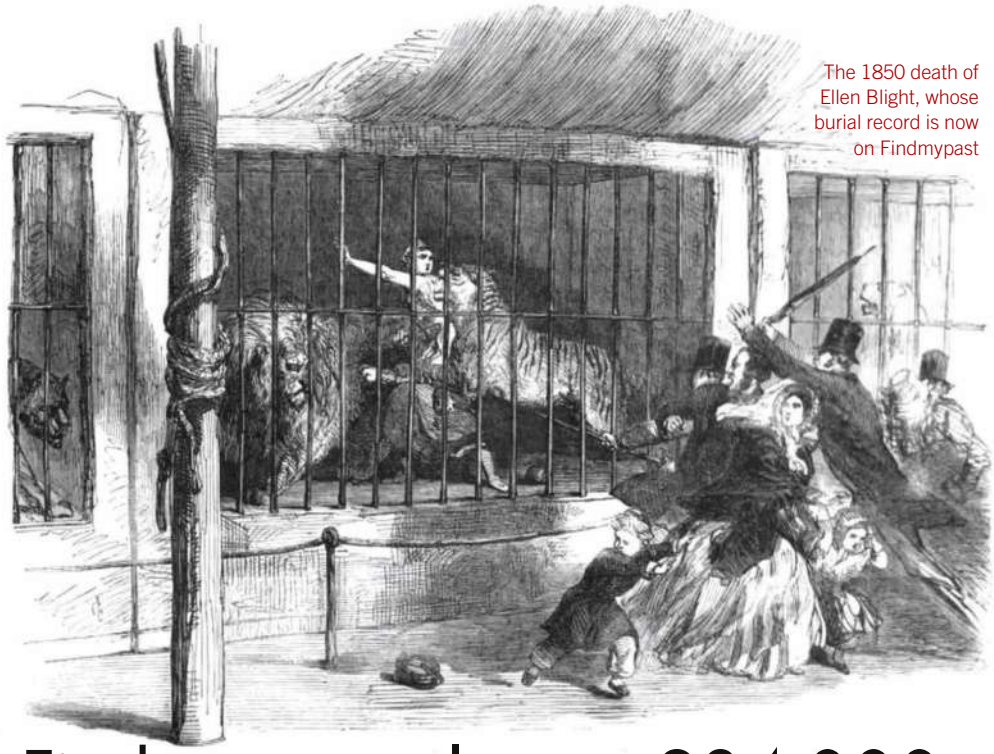
Family history company Old Scottish has created a database of 8,500 Scottish convicts who were transported to Australia between 1787 and 1867. Old Scottish founding partner Fergus Smith went through the existing transportation registers of British convicts to identify Scottish convicts, and cross-referenced them with Scottish court records to find out more about their crimes. The convicts are listed on a database at **oldscottish.com/convict-criminal-records.html**. Family historians can pay £50 for Old Scottish to retrieve and digitise a convict's court records.


COUNTY OF FLINT WAR MEMORIAL.
1914. Record of Service. 1919.

One of the newly digitised index cards

Flintshire First World War cards published online

Index cards recording men from Flintshire who served in the First World War have now been digitised. The collection is available on North East Wales Archive's database at **tinyurl.com/newa-ww1-flint**. The set of 10,623 cards contains details such as the man's address, regimental number, unit, rank on demobilisation, period of service and distinctions received, and details if he died or went missing. The cards, held at NEWA's Hawarden branch, were indexed and digitised by volunteers in an 18-month project.



The 1850 death of Ellen Blight, whose burial record is now on Findmypast

Findmypast releases 284,000 records from Coventry's history

Family history website Findmypast (findmypast.co.uk) has added 284,027 exclusive records from Coventry in partnership with Coventry Archives.

The record sets include schedules recording damage caused to homes by bombs during the Coventry Blitz (1940–1941); air-raid records (1940–1941); Coventry Workhouse admission and discharge registers (1853–1946); burial records from Coventry's London Road Cemetery (1847–1896); pages from company directories and publications (1908–1966); car vehicle registrations (1921–1944); and pages from Coventry newspapers (1747–1921).

The records include stories of many famous people from Coventry throughout the years, such as the burial of Ellen Blight on 17 January 1850 at London Road Cemetery.

Blight was dubbed the 'Lion Queen' for taming and exhibiting the big cats in her uncle George Wombwell's menagerie. 'Wombwell's Travelling Menagerie' toured the country exhibiting elephants, giraffes, tigers, panthers, lions, a gorilla and a kangaroo.

Tragically, she died at the age of just 17 when she was mauled to death by a tiger during a performance.

Mary McKee, Findmypast's UK archives manager, said, "This is a significant chunk of historical information which offers an amazing opportunity to understand more about Coventry's colourful past – as well as uncover family stories."

CAN YOU HELP?

Social historian and prolific author Jane Robinson (**jane-robinson.com**) is hoping to hear from *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* readers who can share stories of their 'lunatic' female relations, no matter how anecdotal. Robinson is currently working on her 14th book *Lunatic Women*, which she describes as "a major new book about the role of female patients and doctors in the treatment of mental health before the founding of the NHS". If your 'lunatic' relative was cared for by family members or sent to an asylum before the 1950s, whether or not she was diagnosed with a mental illness (some women were committed for 'moral' imbecility, ie bearing a child out of wedlock), then please get in touch by emailing *jane@jane-robinson.com*.

A painting of women in an insane asylum from the late 19th century

GETTY IMAGES / THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD

Mieczysław Frąckiewicz and his daughter Linda at the opening ceremony

New heritage centre celebrates Polish pilots

The world's first heritage centre dedicated to Second World War Polish bomber squadrons has opened in Lincolnshire.

The Polish Bomber Squadrons Heritage Centre is located at RAF Ingham (**rafingham.co.uk**) in Gainsborough, West Lindsey. Later known as RAF Cammeringham, the site served as a Royal Air Force station between 1942 and 1944.

The first squadron to be based at RAF Ingham was No. 300 Polish Bomber Squadron, made up of refugees from Poland, and the station was used by training units and the Polish Air Force until 1946.

The heritage centre opened on 17 April. The ceremony was attended by Toby Dennis, the lord lieutenant of Lincolnshire; Michał Mazurek, the consul general from the Polish Consulate in Manchester; and the families of former crew members.

Mieczysław Frąckiewicz (also known as John Franklin), a 104-year-old former wireless operator with No. 304 Squadron, cut the ribbon to mark the centre's official opening.

The heritage centre is open on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Next head of TNA revealed

Saul Nassé has been appointed the chief executive and keeper of The National Archives at Kew (**nationalarchives.gov.uk**) by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. He will take up the role at the end of July replacing Dr Jeff James, who has been in post since 2014. Nassé is a fellow of Robinson College at the University of Cambridge and former group chief executive of Cambridge Assessment, the university's examinations business. He has also held leadership roles at the BBC both in the UK and India, including producing educational content for BBC Bitesize.

Saul Nassé has been named the new chief executive of The National Archives

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The age of John Tinniswood from Southport, who became the world's oldest man in April (**tinyurl.com/guardian-jat**)

Henry Avery

Two shipwreck explorers say they've discovered that the 17th-century 'Pirate King' became a spy for William III (**tinyurl.com/guardian-ave**)

£27m

The cost of the new Perth Museum, which is now open (**tinyurl.com/bbc-perth-mus**)

Everett Leland Yager

The jawbone of the US Marine, who died on a training exercise in California in 1951, has been identified thanks to DNA testing (**tinyurl.com/yahoo-jaw**)

Over 10m

The number of residential and trade directory records that have been added to **thegenealogist.co.uk**

A record from the Irish Court of Chancery in Dublin of a dispute between two women

New project researching Irish women's experiences uses AI tools

A new research project will use artificial intelligence (AI) to uncover evidence of women's experiences in 16th- and 17th-century Ireland contained within historic documents.

The €2.5 million project 'VOICES: Life and Death, War and Peace, c1550–c1700: Voices of Women in Early Modern Ireland' (**https://voicesproject.ie**), run by Trinity College Dublin, will scrutinise records with the assistance of AI-driven text-recognition tools such as Transkribus. The documents under the microscope include the 1641 Depositions, which record violence against Protestants in the 1641 Irish Rebellion; wills; inquisitions; maps; and surveys. The resulting data will be presented in an open-access tool called a Knowledge Graph.

Prof Declan O'Sullivan of Trinity's ADAPT Centre and School of Computer Science and Statistics leads the computer-science aspect of the project. He said, "Accessing and processing a diversity of historical data sources and turning this data into meaningful knowledge that is easily accessible to the public and researchers alike presents a real technical challenge. It is a technical challenge, however, that we in ADAPT are confident that Knowledge Graph and AI-driven technologies will help us overcome."

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL / THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF IRELAND

From War To Romance

Alan Crosby reveals how a thorny question of European politics and a glimpse through a window changed his family's history

Let me tell you a story, which I heard from my cousin 15 years ago. The tale begins with the 'Schleswig–Holstein Question', one of the knottiest of the many problems in the tangled web of 19th-century European politics. As British foreign secretary Lord Palmerston is reputed to have said, "The Schleswig–Holstein Question is so complicated, only three men in Europe have ever understood it. One was Prince Albert, who is dead. The second was a German professor, who became mad. I am the third, and I have forgotten all about it."

In essence, the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were the possessions of the Danish Crown, with a mixed German and Danish population. In Schleswig, the northern duchy, there was a Danish majority, while in Holstein the Germans predominated. Prussia, the rising power that was spearheading moves towards German unification, cast acquisitive eyes upon the two duchies. Between 1848 and 1852 Denmark and Prussia fought a scrappy war over their ownership, in which the Danes were victorious, but that did not end the increasingly bitter dispute.

The Prussian soldier could not get the Danish girl out of his mind

During the autumn of 1863 tensions rose, as the Danes sought to formally integrate Schleswig into the kingdom of Denmark. On Christmas Eve forces from several German states invaded and occupied Holstein, and on 1 February 1864 Prussian and Austrian troops crossed the border into Schleswig. At the end of that bitterly cold month they advanced into Denmark proper, and by the middle of July the whole of Jutland, the Danish mainland, was occupied. Denmark sued for peace, and following the Treaty of Vienna on 30 October relinquished almost all of Schleswig–Holstein to Prussia. But, you might ask, what has all of this got to do with family history? Here is my cousin's story…

In the spring of 1864, some of the Prussian troops were moving northwards through Jutland, deeper into Denmark. Although this was a real war, with battles and sieges and thousands of casualties, it was not total war. For the Danish people, ordinary daily life had to continue as much as possible. The Prussian troops came to a village and marched through, doubtless observed closely by its inhabitants. They passed the village school, where children of all ages from infants to teenagers were being taught their lessons. One of the soldiers looked in through the window, and a beautiful girl looked back at him and smiled. They marched on.

But the young Prussian soldier could not get the lovely Danish girl out of his mind. Eventually he came to a decision, and that summer he deserted from the Prussian Army in Jutland, and went into hiding. In August the fighting ended, and (still incognito, since as a deserter he could have been shot) he made his way back through southern Jutland and found the village with the school.

The villagers regarded him with hostility and suspicion, but he was soon able to persuade them of his honest intentions. He found the girl, declared his love for her, and to his joy it was reciprocated.

In due course they were married. The soldier never went back to Prussia, but spent the rest of his long life in Denmark. He returned to his former trade, working as a carpenter and joiner. He became a leading figure in the village, building wooden houses, barns and the well-house that protected the communal water supply. The couple raised a large family, born and bred Danish but with a German surname to remind them of the events of 1864.

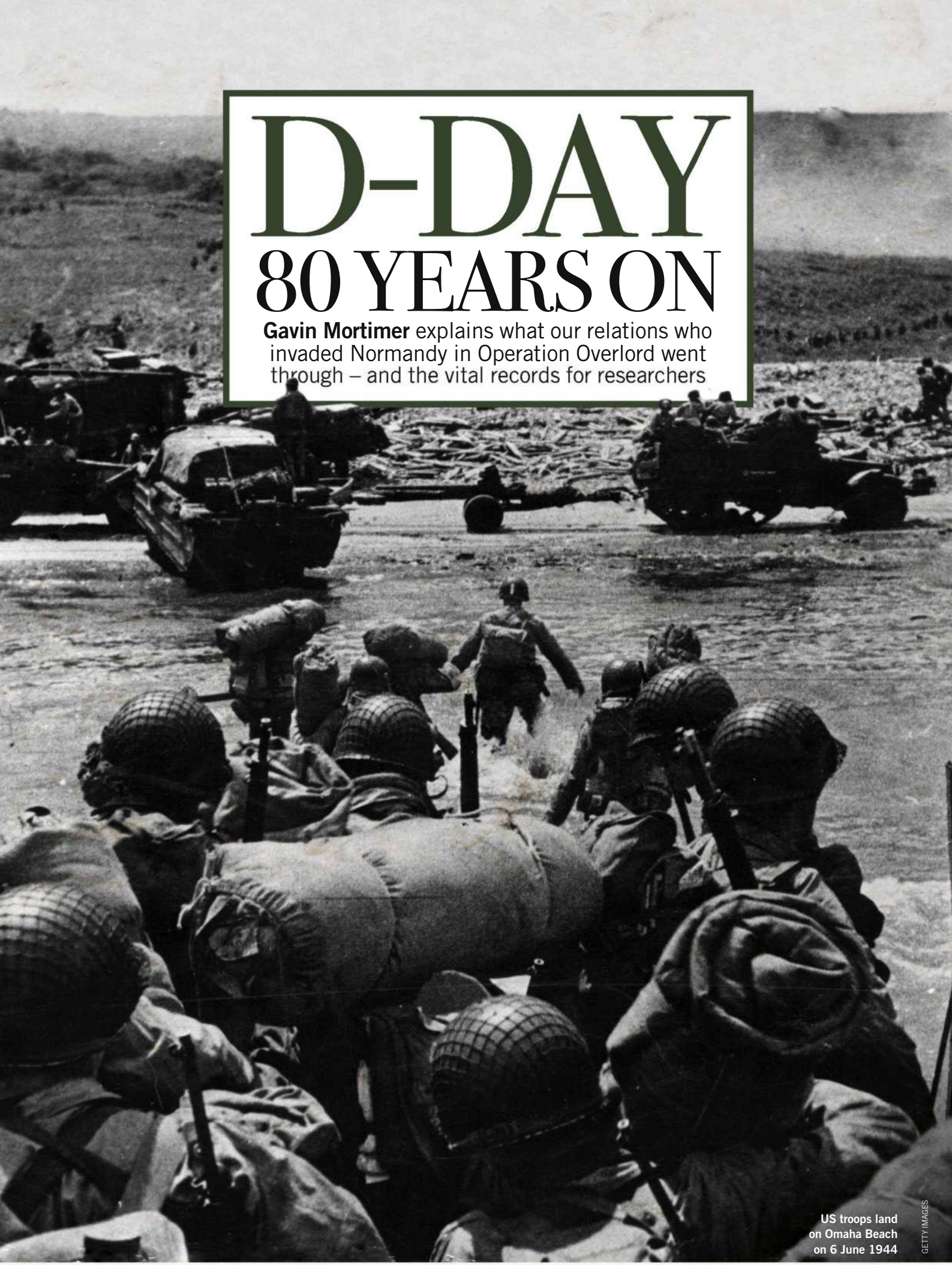
My cousin, although from Manchester, was half-Danish. His mother, born near Copenhagen in 1930, was the great granddaughter of the soldier and the gentle smiling schoolgirl.

ALAN CROSBY lives in Lancashire and is the editor of *The Local Historian*

ILLUSTRATION WWW.SUEGENT.COM

D-DAY 80 YEARS ON

Gavin Mortimer explains what our relations who invaded Normandy in Operation Overlord went through – and the vital records for researchers



US troops land on Omaha Beach on 6 June 1944

GETTY IMAGES

The Allies invaded Normandy from the air as well as the sea, parachuting to the ground

The sky above Normandy in northern France was full of men floating to earth in the minutes after midnight on Tuesday 6 June 1944.

The first to jump were 120 US Pathfinders under the command of Captain Frank Lillyman. They had sung songs on the flight across the Channel from their base in England to keep up their spirits. They left the aircraft with "wonderful" morale, recalled Lillyman, parachuting to earth without incident. They then went about their business with swift and silent precision, marking a series of drop zones with fluorescent panels and radar beacons for the imminent arrival of a huge airborne landing over an area of the Cherbourg Peninsula measuring 50 square miles.

Fifty miles east of the US Pathfinders, 60 British Pathfinders from the 22nd Independent Parachute Company were undertaking a similar task on the eastern extremity of the invasion zone. They had half an hour to erect three drop zones using their lights and transponding ground radar before 4,255 soldiers from the British 6th Airborne Division started jumping over Merville, Ranville, Troarn and Trouville.

Decoy Dummies

Back on the western sector of the invasion zone, six men from the British Special Air Service (SAS) parachuted into the black Normandy night along with 200 dummy parachutists nicknamed 'Ruperts'. Constructed out of sandbags, the Ruperts were a third the size of an average man but in the dark, and from the ground, they resembled a soldier as they fell to earth, and were intended to distract the Germans from the main drop zones.

A larger contingent of British special forces came to earth in Normandy at 12.30am in six Horsa gliders. The objective of Major John Howard and 180 men of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry was to seize two small bridges over the River Orne (Ranville Bridge) and Caen ▶

GETTY IMAGES

Jim Booth 1921–2022

Gavin celebrates the bravery of one of Operation Overlord's heroes

Jim Booth had a front-row seat on D-Day as one of the crew of a midget submarine whose task was to guide in the invasion fleet. Jim, who died in 2022 at the age of 101, joined the Royal Navy not long after the outbreak of war, but he "soon got bored with normal navy life as a junior officer". So he volunteered for a special-forces unit called the Combined Operations Assault Pilotage Parties (usually abbreviated to COPP). Their expertise lay in coastal reconnaissance during the planning of amphibious assaults, and COPP personnel had operated with success during the invasions of North Africa in November 1942 and Sicily the following year. But they were small-scale compared with the Normandy Landings, the largest amphibious invasion in history. And Booth had one of the most important roles.

He was assigned to X-Craft 23, a mini submarine 52 feet long, five feet in width and powered by a four-cylinder 42-horsepower diesel engine of the type used in London buses. Under the command of Lieutenant George Honour, X23 left Portsmouth on the evening of 2 June and headed 110 miles south to the Normandy coast.

They were in position 1¼ miles off Sword, the most easterly of the five invasion beaches, shortly after dawn on 3 June. The sub remained on the seabed until the early hours of 6 June. Then it surfaced, and Booth raised some lights seaward and activated a radio beacon to guide in the main fleet. It was a foul morning so the five men stayed below deck, warming themselves with tea, before heading up top. "Suddenly we saw them," remembered Booth. "It was a case of 'Bloody hell, look at that lot!' It was literally ships as far as the eye could see. A very spectacular sight." The invasion was finally under way.

▶ Canal (Bénouville Bridge). These were to be held in order to prevent German tanks reaching the beaches as the seaborne invasion was in progress. One of the first men out of the gliders was Lieutenant Den Brotheridge, commander of 25 Platoon. He raced across the 100 feet of open ground to Bénouville Bridge with a yell of "Come on 25!" Moments later he was shot dead. Brotheridge was the first Allied fatality of D-Day but many more soldiers, sailors and airmen would be dead by the end of the day.

At 1.15am the main US airborne assault began comprising 6,600 men of the 101st Division and 6,400 men of the 82nd Division. Aboard one of the 882 aircraft was Carl Beck, an 18-year-old from Missouri, a member of the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Division. Their mission was to seize the strategically important village of Pouppeville, but as the aircraft approached the drop zone it was hit by 20 mm German anti-aircraft fire. "It was a bad scene," Beck said in later life. "You could hear the 20 mm hitting the airplanes – it's like your head is in a bucket and somebody is pounding on the bucket."

They were told to jump before the aircraft exploded. Beck landed safely, amid "all kinds of shooting and activity". He found one of his comrades, but they soon realised that they were miles from their target. There was nothing for the pair to do but lie low and try to avoid being captured.

Fierce Fighting

Throughout the rest of the night, the British and US airborne troops fought fierce engagements with the Germans, slowly securing their objectives as dawn broke and the main invasion fleet approached the coast.

The first soldiers to come ashore were the Americans at 6.30am on the western beaches that had been given the codenames 'Utah' and 'Omaha'. The weather was poor – strong winds made for a rough swell and troublesome waves that hindered the 23,000 men of the US 4th Infantry Division ▶

D-DAY RESOURCES

Here's how you can uncover the experiences of your D-Day ancestor

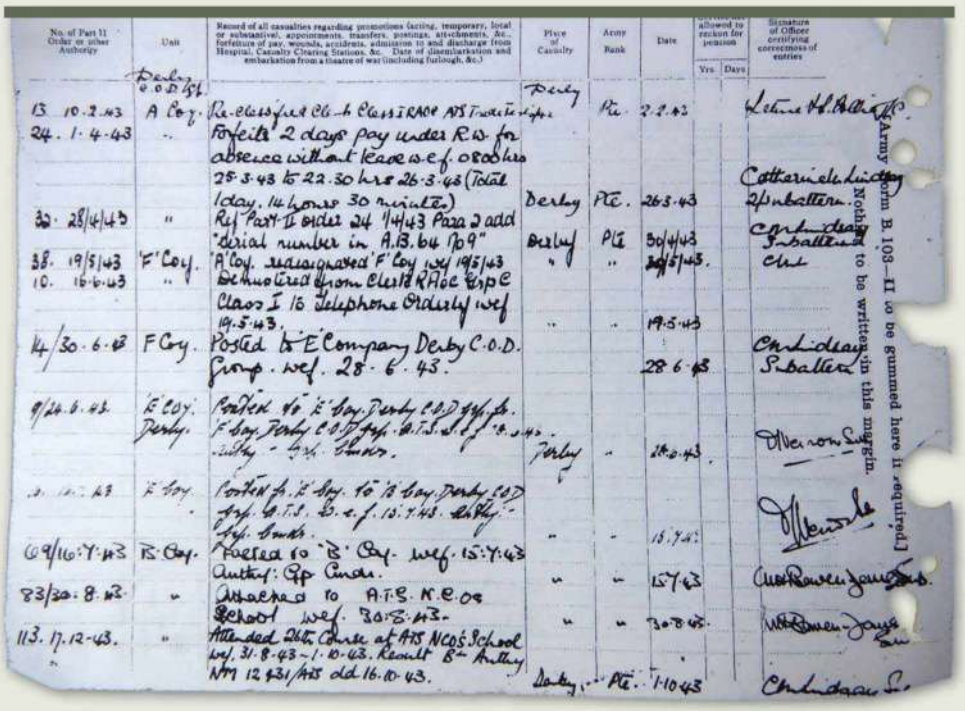
First-Hand Accounts

Eyewitness accounts from both servicemen and civilians are readily available online

WW2 People's War is a fantastic resource

On both sides of the Atlantic, archives, museums and libraries have accumulated a wealth of first-hand accounts from those who participated in D-Day: from soldiers and sailors to nurses and other civilians. These include the National Army Museum, London (**nam.ac.uk/explore/d-day**), and the Imperial War Museum London (**iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-london**). In the USA, the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project Collection has a vast array of testimonies available at **loc.gov/collections/veterans-history-project-collection**.

Finally, the BBC has collated thousands of Britons' memories of the war, including hundreds from veterans of D-Day: **bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/categories/c54665/**.



A British Army service record from the Second World War

Service Records

It's always worth tracking down a forebear's service record

Until recently, the Ministry of Defence held the 10 million service records of Britain's war veterans, but a project is under way to transfer them to The National Archives at Kew with the first tranche, consisting of 600,000 records of non-officers, already transferred and searchable via its catalogue Discovery. For further details see the online research guide at **nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-soldiers-in-service-after-1918**.

Across the pond the National Archives at St Louis, Missouri, holds the Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) for veterans from all service branches with a discharge date of 1961 or earlier: **archives.gov/st-louis**.

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Unit Diaries And Maps

Discover what your relation's unit did on D-Day

The National Archives in Kew, South-West London, houses all of the official military records of D-Day, including unit diaries and maps. The archive's online catalogue Discovery has an excellent search engine: **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/advanced-search**. A limited number of records are available to view via Discovery, or on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61842**), but most are not digitised and can only be seen in person by appointment; see the website for more details. The US National Archives has a similarly comprehensive collection, and an equivalent online search engine located at **archives.gov/research/military/ww2/d-day**.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Vol. I. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

Original

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. (Erase heading not required).

Army Form C. 2118.

Month and Year June 1944

Unit 33 Field Regt RA

Commanding Officer Lt Col T.E. Hussey RA

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	References to Appendices.
Gosport.	2.	0600.	First vehicles loaded on LCT's for operation 'Overlord'. Small guard left on board and personnel return to Marshalling Camps.	
Portsmouth	4		Personnel embark.	
	5.		D day postponed 24 hours. Operation continued as on 1200 hrs. 5 June and sail at 1230 hrs. Weather choppy and nearly all on LCT's are sick.	WAR DIARIES SECTION No. 12 JUL 1944 G.H.Q. 2nd Echelon
At sea	6	0430	Stand to. Uneventful but rough crossing. H-90 synchronise watches for run in shoot. Comms good but no communication with FOO who is to control run in bombardment. Adjt orders LO in ML to go forward to observe. Fire for effect opened at H-30 & results reported good. Continue during until H hour 0725 hrs. when 6 ...	

Unit diaries enable you to trace their movements during the war

Newspapers

Thanks to digitisation, brilliant journalism and striking photographs published in historic newspapers are only a click away

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1944.

THE ARMIES OF LIBERATION HAVE ARRIVED: SOLDIERS OF THE ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE THRONG THE ROADS AND VILLAGE STREETS OF FRANCE IN THE FIRST STAGE OF THE LIBERATION OF EUROPE.

Digitised newspapers show us how D-Day and the Second World War were reported for our relations on the home front

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Contemporary newspaper articles provide great insight into D-Day, despite the censorship that applied. Among the war reporters who witnessed the invasion were Richard Dimbleby of the BBC and the American Martha Gellhorn. Their dispatches, and pictures from the likes of legendary war photographer Robert Capa, can be seen on such sites as the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**) and Chronicling America (**chroniclingamerica.loc.gov**), which is owned by the US Library of Congress.

Museums

Specialist museums shed light on the events of 6 June

There are many superb museums dedicated to D-Day, notably the Pegasus Bridge Museum and Memorial (**musee.memorial-pegasus.com/en/**) in Ranville in Normandy, which tells the story of the British airborne role, and the Overlord Museum (**overlordmuseum.com/en/**), close to the Normandy American Cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer and Omaha Beach. A comprehensive list of all of the museums related to D-Day can be found on Normandy Tourism's website: **en.normandie-tourisme.fr/discover**. There are also museums closer to home, such as Airborne Assault: the Museum of the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces at the Imperial War Museum Duxford (**iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford**), and the D-Day Story in Portsmouth (**theddaystory.com**).

The original Bénouville Bridge at the Pegasus Bridge Museum

▶ on Utah Beach. Nonetheless, the troops quickly managed to establish a beachhead.

But on Omaha, the 34,000 men of the 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions suffered terrible casualties from German machine-gunners concealed in concrete bunkers. One of the invaders was Charles Norman Shay, a Native American of the Penobscot Nation, a medic in the 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division. "Of the men standing at the front of the landing craft when the ramp went down, many were hit immediately," Shay recalled. "When I left the landing craft I landed in water about up to my chest. I made my way to the obstacles that the Germans had put up. I was using these for protection. Most of the men who had landed were doing the same thing. I was able to make a dash for the beach, got there, and started treating the wounded."

Going For Gold

The British and Canadians were tasked with securing beachheads at the other beaches codenamed 'Gold', 'Juno' and 'Sword', and they began coming ashore at 7.25am. Gold, the middle of the five, was the responsibility of 25,000 soldiers of the British 50th (Northumbrian) Infantry Division. One of them was Billy Moss of the 61st Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps, who shortly before the invasion had told his brother that he didn't think he would survive. As the ramp of his landing craft went down, he jumped into the sea. However, the water was deeper than expected and Billy, weighed down by his equipment and his heavy radio set, drowned.

Fate was out of most men's hands in those bloody few hours as thousands parachuted from the sky or waded through the surf. Bullets and shells hit some and missed others.

On Juno Canadian Lockie Fulton, commanding a company of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, recalled the turmoil: "We simply struggled through it. You'd see a guy fall next to you. You couldn't help him, but you'd try to drag him along anyway. It was something to see those bullets skipping at you like stones across the water."

Throughout the morning, the Allies made slow but steady progress inland, even from the beach at Omaha, bloodied by the 2,000 casualties the Americans had suffered in establishing a beachhead with the help of the guns of US Navy destroyers.

At 12.15pm the prime minister Winston Churchill told Parliament that "the first of the series of landings in force upon the European Continent has taken place... So far the commanders who are engaged report that everything is proceeding according to plan."

Supply Success

Part of that plan was the transportation across the Channel of two huge mobile harbours codenamed Mulberry, which would enable the Allies to swiftly resupply the invasion force. By mid-afternoon on 6 June the first components of the harbours were being towed into place.

Captured German soldiers march through Cherbourg after the city was liberated by the Allied invaders

GAVIN MORTIMER is a historian. His latest book is *2SAS: Bill Stirling and the Forgotten Special Forces Unit of World War II* (Osprey, 2023)

In contrast to the invaders' efficiency, the Germans' response was confused. It was not until late afternoon that 124 tanks of the 21st Panzer Division were ordered to the beachhead. Corps commander General Erich Marcks told one of the division's commanders, "If we don't throw the British back into the sea, we shall have lost the war." By now, however, the Allies had got tens of thousands of men and armour ashore, and the Panzers were attacked and forced to withdraw.

There would still be plenty of hard fighting in the months ahead, but the tide of war had turned the way of the Allies. At 9pm on 6 June, George VI addressed Britain, the Empire and North America on the BBC: "After nearly five years of toil and suffering, we must renew that crusading impulse on which we entered the war and met its darkest hour," he declared. "We and our Allies are sure that our fight is against evil and for a world in which goodness and honour may be the foundation of the life of men in every land."

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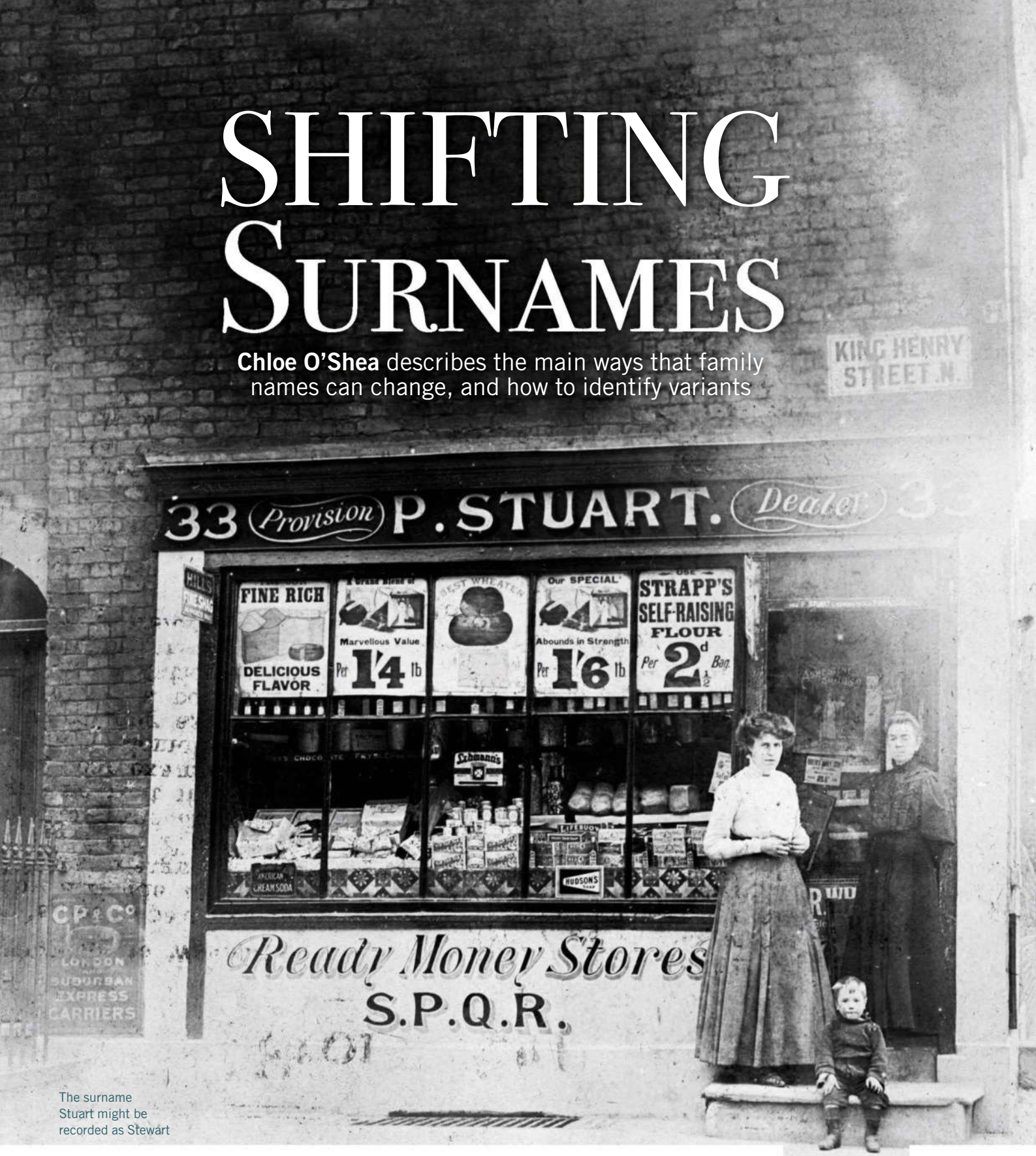
SHIFTING SURNAMES

Chloe O'Shea describes the main ways that family names can change, and how to identify variants



The surname Stuart might be recorded as Stewart

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When we are searching for records of our ancestors, it can be easy to dismiss those where the surname does not match exactly with how we are used to seeing it spelled. The name may have an additional letter, be pluralised, be spelt phonetically or in some cases be a different surname altogether. In fact before the standardisation of surname spellings, we may find several variations of our forebears' surnames.

Some surnames are patronymic meaning they originate from a person's father (eg Robertson); some were allocated according to a person's occupation (eg Carpenter); some are topographical and named after a feature of the landscape (eg Hill); some are characteristic of a person's physical features or aspect of their personality (eg Wise); and others are habitational ie named after a person's birthplace or place of residence (eg Stafford). Knowing a surname's origin can sometimes explain a change in spelling. For example, if a person had a habitational name such as Lichfield but their descendants moved far from the Staffordshire town, then a parish clerk would not know the 'correct' spelling and might write "Litchfield".

Indeed, it was only in the 19th ▶

century that a majority of our ancestors became well educated enough to spell. Prior to this, the spelling of a name was decided upon by the person who was writing an official document, such as a parish register. This clerk or parish official would make their best guess according to our relation's own pronunciation. This is why certain regional accents can change certain surnames, particularly adding or taking away an 'h' to the start of a name that is followed by a vowel, for example Hackley and Ackley.

There are a significant number of examples of small spelling variations. This may be the appearance or disappearance of a letter, such as Isaac to Isaack. It could also be a change of vowel, such as Wise to Wyse. Spellings may change so that they appear differently but sound the same phonetically, such as Croad and Crode. Names were often pluralised or had the last 's' taken away, for example with Bett and Betts. As we trace our tree further back, names begin to appear more archaic as with Pheasant changing to Fesant. With cases such as these, it can help to speak a name aloud to think of other possible spelling variations. How could a name have been misheard, and what might it have changed to?

For example, my Osment branch is frequently recorded as the more commonly known Osmond. I also have Neals that change to Nailes, and Terrys that turn to Tarryes. Care should be taken to ensure that you are tracing the right family, and that a nearby family with a similar surname is not being traced by mistake.

It can help to speak a name aloud to think of possible spelling variations

It can be difficult when trying to prove that a document relates to your forebear in cases of a surname alteration. The best way is to check as many documents as possible relating to both names. For example, if you are looking for the baptism of a Thomas Davidson but the only entry that seems to fit is for a Thomas Davison, then you will need to thoroughly check other records from the area before confirming the person's identity as one and the same. It may be that they are two separate people.

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Identifying A Variant

Firstly, check for any burials of the person with the surname variant. If there is none locally, check other records including marriage registers, tax lists and probate records. Try tracing other siblings of Thomas to see if their surname changes in the same manner. It may be that siblings born later than your ancestor were baptised under the name you are more familiar with.

As well as the unintentional changes to a person's surname, there are numerous cases of people deliberately changing their surname for a particular reason. For example, many of our migrant relations chose to anglicise their surnames to sound more British. You may be researching a branch of your Thomas family tree only to be surprised to find that the name originated in the Russian name of Tolmasoff.

For those of us with repeat criminal offenders in our tree, we may find that they had a long list of aliases. These may be written collectively in prison

DNA

The results of a DNA test can confirm your suspicions about a variant surname

Autosomal DNA tests look at both your mother and father's lines, and are the most commonly used test. The results can help you to prove your tree back five or six generations, depending on which branches you have inherited the most DNA from (usually measured in centimorgans, abbreviated to cM). Your cousin matches may help to prove a theory about surname change if they can be linked back beyond the brick wall that you are trying to break down. Be careful when viewing other peoples' online trees, and always make sure that the DNA match lines up with several sources of documentation before adding a person to your own tree.

The results of a DNA test may help you to confirm any unexpected findings of ethnicity in the case of anglicised surnames. Ethnicity findings are a relatively new science, and results are usually updated once a year on genealogical websites as their database grows. Be sure to check for any further improvements in accuracy that could help you to confirm a foreign branch.

Another popular test is based on the Y-chromosome DNA (Y-DNA) inherited by a son from his father, so can only be taken by males. It is often expected that matches will share the test-taker's surname and that of his father, paternal grandfather etc. However, a wide variety of surnames may appear in the matches because of how surnames change over time. FamilyTreeDNA (**familytreedna.com**) is the market leader, and its Y-DNA tests are used by many researching surnames.

If you have the surname Thatcher, you may have an ancestor who repaired roofs

registers, court records or newspaper reports. Some of our forebears changed their name to avoid being found by the authorities, such as with cases of bigamy and military desertion. Other relations may have changed their name to disassociate themselves from their family after a criminal trial, or because of a bad reputation in business.

Also, if a distant relative of a testator wished to inherit their estate then it was sometimes a requirement within the will that the inheritor change their surname to that of the deceased. For this reason I have a long branch of my Janes line being referred to as 'Janes alias Hopkins', since the Janes family inherited the Hopkins' estate. Where you find aliases in your tree, it is necessary to search for all of the possible surnames when looking for records. There are many examples where a document will give both surnames but only one has been transcribed into an online database.

You may also find a change in cases of bastardy. An unmarried mother is likely to give her child her own surname at their baptism. The father's name may be recorded as a middle name. If the mother later marries, she may decide to bring the child up with her new husband's surname, even if he is not the father. My husband's paternal grandfather was born Vernon Cook in 1921, son of unmarried mother Gladys Cook. When Gladys married Patrick O'Shea a few years later, the couple decided to raise him as Vernon O'Shea.

Where a person's surname has changed entirely, there are various documents that can help. Wills can be the most useful. The testator will often give the full names of their children, siblings and other relatives due to inherit, and where their relationship is also stated this can give you fairly solid proof of identity. Settlement records, particularly settlement examinations, can also give proof as to a change of name, because these can act as a biography of your ancestor. You may also find evidence of surname changes in newspapers, court records, title deeds and divorce records.

WATCH OUT!

When tracing living relations, remember that a married couple may have taken the bride's surname, double-barrelled both surnames or coined a surname from parts of each.

Deed-Poll Confusion

In addition, it is widely believed that a deed poll is necessary to start using a new surname, but this has never been a legal requirement so long as the reason is not fraudulent. It is certainly more complicated to change a surname today, because of the need for our identity documents to match. In contrast the likes of passports and driving licences were of no concern to our forebears.

Finally, if one of your ancestors was recorded under a wide variety of surname spellings in their lifetime, which is the correct surname to record them under on your family tree? There is no definitive right answer, but most researchers use either the surname they were baptised as or the name they were most commonly recorded under.

Wildcards

Chloe explains why wildcards are a must when exploring online records

Whether you're looking for your ancestor online or viewing physical records in person, you need to bear all likely spelling variants in mind, because a failure to do so is a common reason for research brick walls. If you're working with online databases and catalogues then wildcards – symbols used in place of letters – will return a wider diversity of search results.

Particularly helpful is '?' which can replace a single letter in a person's name, meaning searching for 'B?ll' will return results relating to Ball, Bell and Bull among others. Another excellent option is '*', which will match with more than one character.

For example, searching for 'Osm*' will give results for Osment and Osmond, as well as any other names that have been transcribed as starting with those three letters.

Also, using a wildcard may enable you to find an erroneous transcription relating to your forebear. Try searching on different sites, such as Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) and Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**), which may uncover different results depending on how a record has been transcribed. This is particularly relevant in the case of illegible handwriting or uncommonly spelled surnames.

Chloe O'Shea is a genealogist and the author of *Discover Your Dorset Ancestors* (2022). Find out more at her site **thepastrevealed.co.uk**

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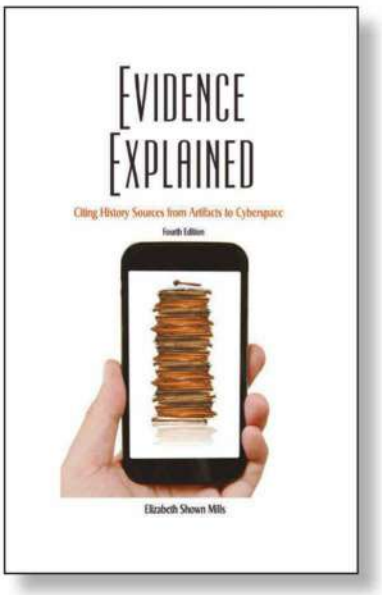

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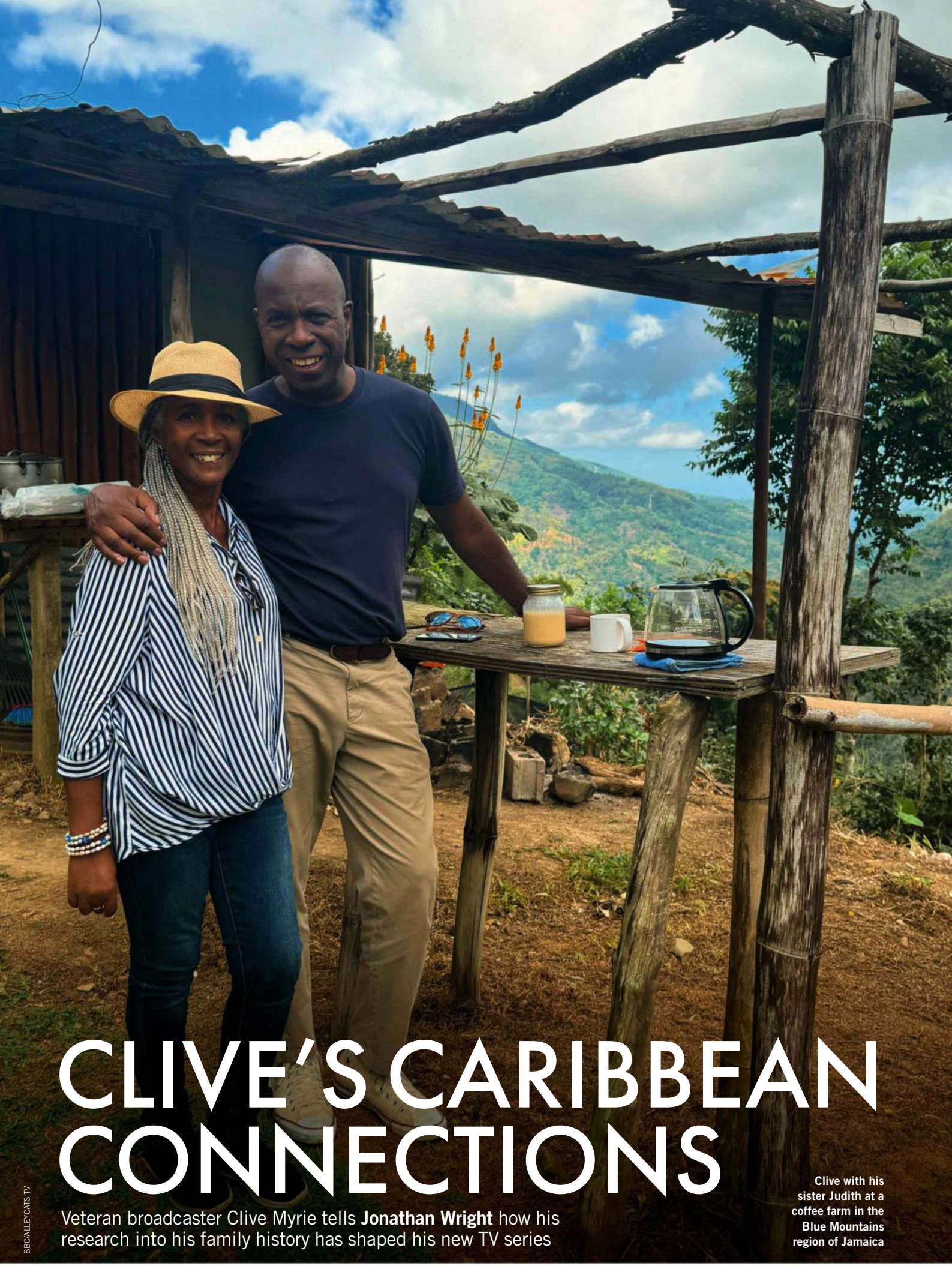


CLIVE'S CARIBBEAN CONNECTIONS

Veteran broadcaster Clive Myrie tells **Jonathan Wright** how his research into his family history has shaped his new TV series

BBC/ALLEYCATS TV

Clive with his sister Judith at a coffee farm in the Blue Mountains region of Jamaica

When the BBC gave Clive Myrie the green light, he was surprised. Having been asked to come up with ideas for another travel series to follow in the footsteps of last year's *Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip*, the journalist, newsreader and host of the legendary quiz show *Mastermind* put forward a number of suggestions. The Caribbean was "pretty near the bottom of the list", if only because of the unavoidable expense.

Instead, he reveals, "The BBC said, 'We want you to go the Caribbean, there is no question about it, but we'll give you the same budget as you had for Italy.'" At which point Myrie, speaking from his home in North London, starts laughing. While he got to visit some idyllic places, the costs meant his filming schedule was demanding.

Nevertheless, you can understand Auntie's enthusiasm for the project. Exploring the very different nations of Barbados, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, *Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure* contains 15 episodes each lasting 30 minutes, and reflects his professional skills as a senior news journalist and foreign correspondent. It offers a mix of travelogue and reportage, while also rooting the programme in Myrie's more personal reflections about his own family history and what it means to be a black Briton.

Although he was born and raised in Bolton, Greater Manchester, Myrie's life has been profoundly shaped by familial connections stretching across the Atlantic. His mother and father Lynne and Norris, people he vividly sketches in his recent book *Everything Is Everything: A Memoir of Love, Hate and Hope* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2023), were from Westmoreland, Jamaica's westernmost parish.

The Windrush Experience

Like so many countless other members of the Windrush Generation, Lynne and Norris left Jamaica in the early 1960s in search of work opportunities. Norris was encouraged to move to the UK by his brother Cecil, who had already settled here after finishing military service with the Royal Air Force in the Second World War – one of a number of Caribbean men who followed this path. Going further back, Myrie's great uncle William Runners served on the Western Front in the First World War.

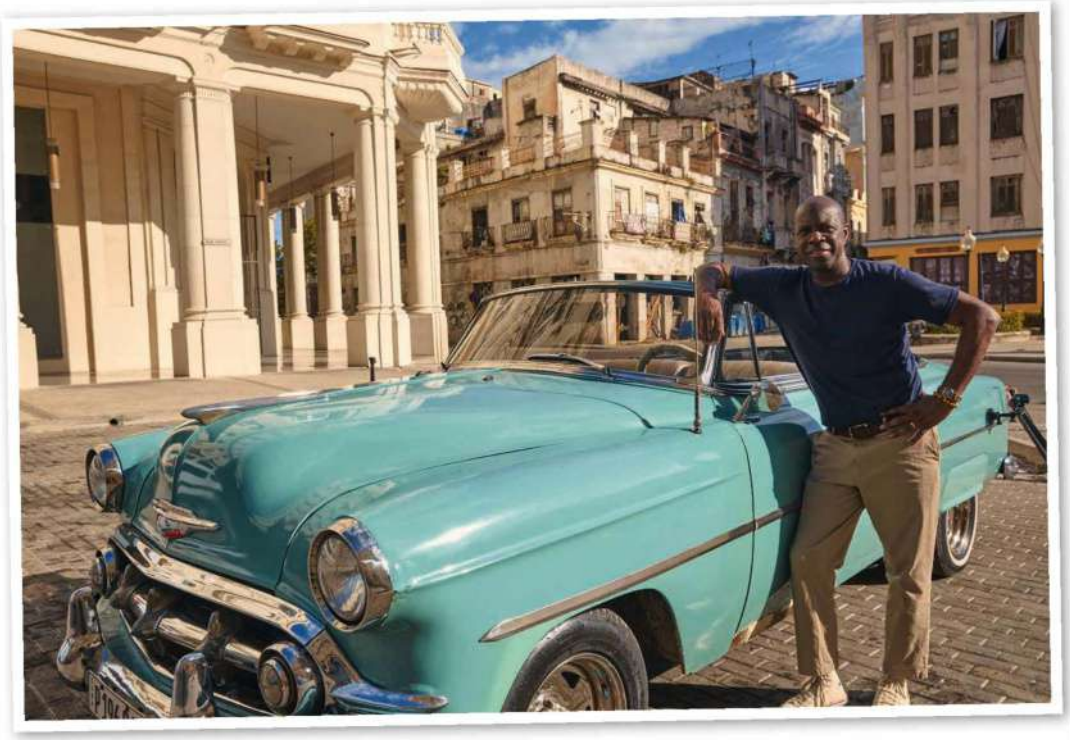
"[Cecil] fell in love and moved to Bolton," explains Myrie, "and that's why my mum and dad ended up there. After the war, of course, you had the 1948 British Nationality Act that made everyone in the British Empire citizens on an equal footing. So my mum and dad flying from Jamaica to Britain was the equivalent of someone going from Edinburgh to London, or Leeds to Manchester."

Marcia Douglas, the colonel of the Charles Town Maroon Community, teaches Clive how to play the *abeng*, a musical instrument fashioned out of animal horn

The fact that so many travelled with the right to reside in the UK, but later got caught up in the hostile environment policy introduced by Conservative home secretary Theresa May in 2012, and were denied access to healthcare and benefits and even deported, goes a long way to explaining the fury over the Windrush scandal. Myrie's elder half-brothers Lionel and Peter were among those affected.

In the UK, Norris found work in a factory, while Lynne worked as a seamstress; although she had been a teacher in Jamaica, she lacked the necessary qualifications to work in British classrooms. Both encountered racism, but persevered. For all that, according to Myrie's fascinating memoir, his father never quite settled in the UK.

In contrast, as a child, Myrie junior didn't much like visiting Jamaica. "The first time I went I hated it – it was too bloody hot. The mosquitos had a field day, man. It was summertime because, of course, that's



The series includes a visit to Havana, Cuba, where Clive gets behind the wheel of this beautiful Chevrolet

BBC/ALLEYCATS TV

when the family travelled. I missed my friends from school, and playing football on the streets with my mates. I had to go to this place that was miles away on a plane. I was *not* impressed."

Fast-forward 50 years or so and Myrie's attitudes have softened. In *Caribbean Adventure*, he meets up with members of his extended family and visits his elder sister Judith. She was a 'barrel child', one of the kids who stayed behind in the Caribbean while their parents worked to set up a new home abroad. Only later did Judith move to the UK.

Clive learns how to make the perfect Jamaican jerk pork

Rediscovering Her Roots

"She was born in Jamaica, and so she was desperate to move back at some point," Myrie explains. "She's now done that, and we reflect on that in the programme. Interestingly I found while making the programme that I have a closer affinity with Jamaica now, perhaps because my sister's there."

Visiting Judith in Portland, a parish in the north-east of the island, Myrie felt for the first time that he could actually live in Jamaica – and found himself wondering about, in poet Robert Frost's phrase, the road not taken.

"I had all these ideas about what would have happened if my parents hadn't emigrated. If I had grown up in the Caribbean, what would my life have been like?"

If Myrie's reflections on being a child of the Windrush Generation illuminate much about the black British experience, another family tale explored in the series takes Myrie further back in time. When he was growing up, his parents told him that his surname was Cuban. Without giving away too many spoilers, there is certainly a family connection to Cuba via his paternal grandfather Eugene, who travelled to the island from Jamaica. Initially, Myrie says, Eugene would likely have worked in the American Zone around Guantánamo Bay, created by a 1903 lease agreement between the two countries, because he couldn't speak Spanish.

Most of the stories in the series aren't as directly personal as these. It's more that Myrie's own life and family tree provide jumping-off points for discussing Caribbean history, a way to contextualise the experiences that he's sharing with the viewers at home.

Plus Myrie has fun. In the episode about Cuba's capital Havana, for example, he drives around in one of the vintage US cars so associated with the island, and braves the ring in one of the city's most famous boxing gyms. Like the late broadcaster Alan Whicker, a fellow globe-trotter and one of Myrie's TV heroes, he has a real knack of genuinely paying attention to those he meets, better to tease out their stories.

If I had grown up in the Caribbean, what would my life have been like?

But to return to his own deeper family story, and here is one of the bleakest facets of Caribbean history, it would have at one point involved ancestors who were trafficked on the Middle Passage from Africa. A DNA test, Myrie says, shows him to be 30 per cent Nigerian. It also revealed Irish roots, possibly because of Jamaica's history of landowners using indentured workers as well as slaves.

"To be honest, I don't feel any pressing need to explore that side of my history." It's enough, perhaps, to know that it happened.

Besides, Myrie is already thinking about another family story, which has helped to provide the inspiration for a novel he's been researching and writing.

One of Myrie's maternal great grandfathers worked on the construction of the Panama Canal, the waterway that links the Atlantic and Pacific, which opened in 1914. It's an engineering epic most often told as a tale of US ingenuity and derring-do. But there's another narrative too, focused on the Caribbean labourers who did so much of the work, despite harsh treatment resulting from racism rooted in attitudes imported from the Deep South of the USA.

"If you didn't have the workers – if you didn't have people who were willing to die, and tens of thousands did in the building of that canal, and if they hadn't been willing to leave everything they knew in order to go and create this wonder of the world, then it wouldn't have been built," he says. "And it's only really in the last decade or so that the contribution by ordinary Caribbean people has been fully appreciated."

It sounds like this veteran storyteller has another tale to tell – and we can't wait for him to share all the details.

FIND OUT MORE

Clive Myrie's Caribbean Adventure will be on BBC Two and BBC iPlayer in May. You can find expert advice for researching your own Jamaican roots on our website: **tinyurl.com/wdytya-search-jamaica**

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WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

'My Family Adventured In North America'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Samantha Taylor has uncovered the travels of relatives who left Essex to try their luck in the burgeoning cities of the USA and the Canadian wilderness. By **Gail Dixon**

An oceanic swell of migrants left Britain in the 19th and early 20th centuries, looking for fresh opportunities in the Americas. Among them were three brothers from Samantha Taylor's family, who grew up immersed in the rhythms of maritime life.

Samantha is retired and lives in Clevedon, North Somerset, overlooking the Bristol Channel. "I grew up on the south coast of England, and I love the sea," she says. "It's important for me to look at it each day."

Samantha began tracing her genealogy in 2013, after her daughter created a family tree as a present for her birthday. "All I knew was that my maternal grandmother Marion Farrington was born in 1902, and that her father Frederick had visited America and thought of emigrating there. He even told his wife Nettie Heaver to sell all their furniture and pack up."

Joseph had worked in the silver and cobalt mines of Ontario

Samantha's great grandmother Nettie Farrington née Heaver with her daughters Marion *(left)* and Muriel

Using census entries and birth, marriage and death records, Samantha traced her lineage back to her 4x great grandfather William Farrington, born in Brightlingsea, Essex, c1780. "I was intrigued to discover that Marion, and previous generations of Farringtons, were born there. It was somewhere new to explore."

Brightlingsea is several miles south-east of Colchester and overlooks the estuary of the River Colne. It has been renowned for boatbuilding and seafaring since the time of Henry VIII, and probably beyond. Today, its colourful beach huts and working harbour make it a haven for daytrippers.

During the 19th century, the harbour would have been a hub of vessels laden with their catch of oysters and sprats. Wealthy people commissioned the men of Brightlingsea to build and crew race-winning yachts. It sounds idyllic, but the town's fishermen have long faced peril from storms, freezing conditions in winter and the treacherous shoals of the Gunfleet Sand and the Sunk.

"My Farringtons all earned their living as mariners, a pattern that wasn't broken until my great grandfather Frederick became a shoe- and bootmaker. Frederick had his own business on Brightlingsea High Street."

Frederick's parents were able seaman Thomas Farrington and his wife Jane Wright. They had four other sons, George, Thomas, Joseph and Arthur, who died when he was only two years old.

Voyage To Philadelphia

George became a shipwright and joined HM Dockyard at Sheerness, Kent. Joseph qualified as a mariner at the age of 18, but in his 20s he embarked on a different kind of adventure. "A passenger list on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) revealed that in 1905 he sailed for Philadelphia, America. I visited Essex in 2019, and my cousin Fiona generously gave me a copy of an old newspaper article about Joseph. The original is fragile and frayed, so it's hard to see where and when it was published.

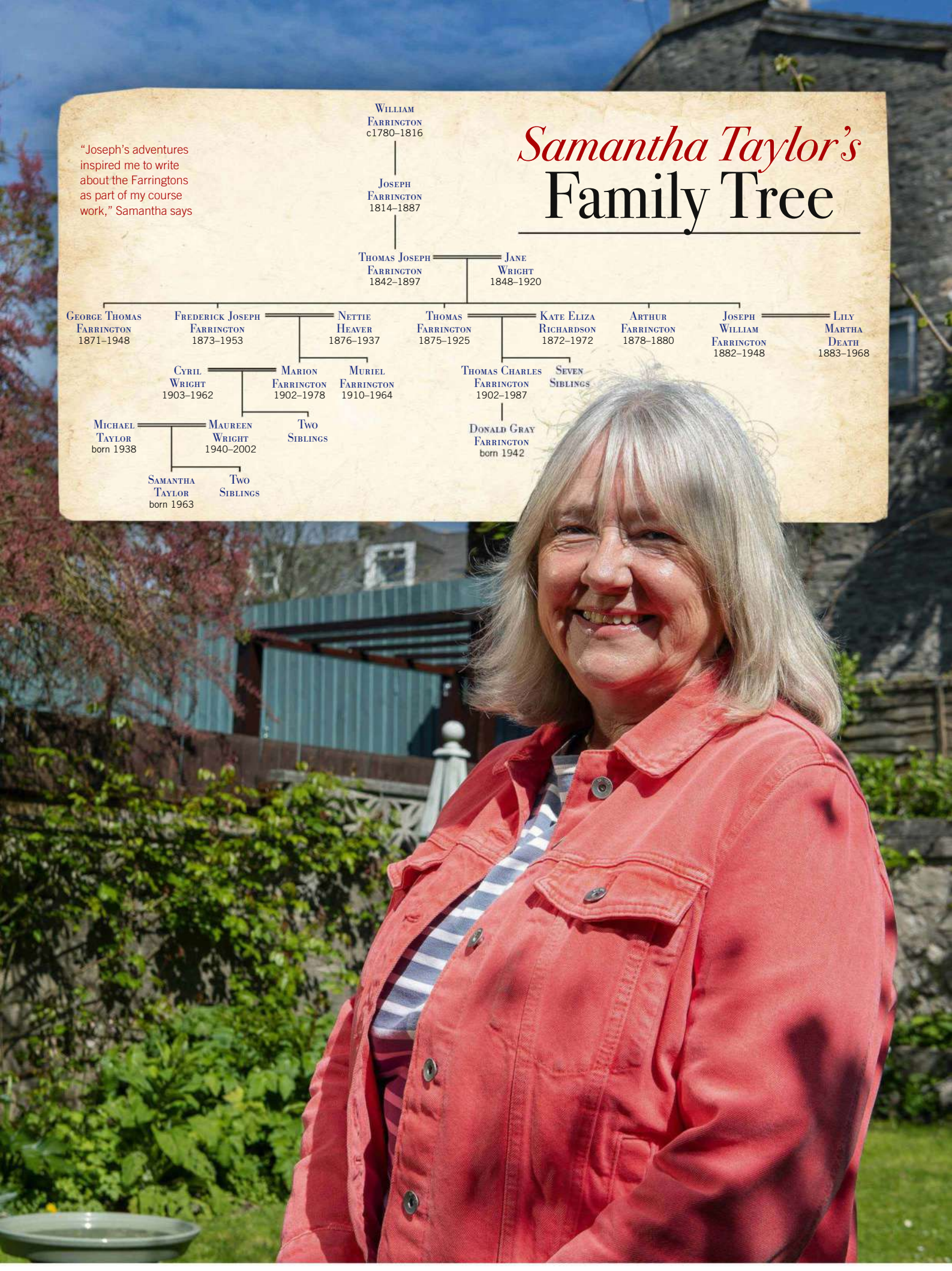
"The headline stated, 'Real Life Thrills That Rival Reel Thrills Experienced By Local Man'. There was a photo of Joseph, and the caption described him as a 'hero of eight years of hardship and toil in the northern Canadian mining country'.

"The article explained that Joseph had worked 600 feet below ground in the silver and cobalt mines of Ontario. He would tramp with a heavy pack and canoe through hundreds of ▶

UNP/TIM MOSSFORD

Samantha Taylor's Family Tree

"Joseph's adventures inspired me to write about the Farringtons as part of my course work," Samantha says



acres of wilderness ‘in search of the end of the prospector’s rainbow’. It was chilling to read of some of his experiences. Once he had to cower in a marsh with terror-stricken wild animals and watch a forest fire leap a 75-foot river as though it were a mere puddle.”

The journalist described Joseph as ‘a matter-of-fact sort of person, who doesn’t seem to see much of the romantic in what he has been through’.

After many years of mining, Joseph headed south to Florida, and then to Springfield, Ohio, in 1917 where he worked as an insurance agent – and where Samantha believes the interview took place.

Joseph returned to Brightlingsea in 1927. He married Lily Martha Death, and worked as a bus conductor.

“It was amazing to read of his exploits. I never expected to make such a discovery, and I felt so proud of him.”

...eal Life Thrills That Rival Reel Thrills Experienced By Local Man

Road in northern Canada indicating the difficulties of freight transportation. A kodak portrait of Joseph Farrington, hero of eight years of hardship and toil in the northern Can[illegible] mining country.

COWERING in a marsh with terror stricken wild animals and watching a Canadian forest fire leap a 75-foot stream as though it were a mere puddle; tramping with a heavy pack and canoe across portages through [illegible] in search of the end of the prospector’s rainbow; working 600 feet below ground in the silver and cobalt mines of the Cobalt, Ontario country, and sledging with the thermometer at 60 degrees below zero.

These are among the experiences of an undemonstrative little Englishman, Joseph W. Farrington, living at 2541 Columbus-av.

Farrington measures five-feet six inches in height, and is of medium build. He is a matter-of-fact sort person, who doesn’t seem to see much of the romantic in what he has been through.

Today he is following the prosaic occupation of insurance agent, and declares that he does not yearn to go back to the great northern wilderness about which the fiction artists paint their halo of fascination. “I broke away from it, and I’m not going to let it get me,” is Farrington’s way of putting it.

What he means is the lure of the prospector’s life, toiling for the price of an outfit and spending it in search of the wealth which is always coming the next day.

He’s Had Enough.

“I’ve seen them, old fellows that have been at it all their lives, tucked away in some forsaken little cabin and seeing people so seldom that they go around talking to themselves,” declares Farrington. “Eight years is enough for me.”

Farrington came to Canada when he was 21 years old, from Brightlingsea, Essex, England.

He drifted into Hamilton, Ontario, and in 1906 was caught in the Cobalt rush which sent thousands, filled with high hopes, into the country about 200 miles south of Hudson Bay, the area in which the rock, in some places, contains veins and layers of nearly pure metallic silver.

Farrington labored for wages in the workings of some of the large [illegible]

located some claims which gave promise, penetrating westward 300 miles from Cochrane. He sold claims, spent the money looking for the big strike, and labored in the mines to get ready for new starts.

In 1914 [illegible] a hand and [illegible] which he says he will not go back. The world war shut off the supply of cyanide and quicksilver, used in extracting from the silver and cobalt bearing ore. With the cold winter nearly at hand, and the mines shut down, Farrington and some friends tossed coins to see where they would go. Farrington went south, a long way south, to Palm Beach, Florida.

Goes to Extremes.

“It was certainly some jump to take and believe me, I suffered from that hot climate while I was getting used to it,” he declared.

It was while he was engaged in some work for the county that Farrington first heard of Springfield, Ohio. Accompanying a shipment of Kelly Road Rollers from this city was a Springfielder with whom Farrington talked, and who, like all good Springfielders, bragged about the town. It was some time later that Farrington roved again, going to Cleveland, where he worked for [illegible] weeks. From Cleveland he worked his way to Springfield, where he has been since last February.

Among the souvenirs of his experiences which Farrington retains are some samples of silver bearing rock, and some good sized specimens of nearly pure silver from the Cobalt country. He has a collection of photographs, [illegible] of his pictures are those which he carries in his mind.

The press accounts of Canadian forest fires mean something to Farrington, for the small settlements in the Cobalt country have suffered losses or have been wiped out several times by the scourge.

Constant Menace.

“A man can hardly make a clearing for his home big enough to make it safe,” Farrington declares. “The flames make a wind which carries burning fragments, sometimes as large as branches and drops them like hail, making the fire fairly leap over the country.

From Cross Lake near Cobalt, where I had taken refuge in a marsh, with deer, moose, wolves and rabbits, all terrified, I saw the fire jump across the lake, which is only 75-feet wide at that point. In some of the small streams, or creeks, fish are killed by these fires, which warm the water to a higher temperature than they can survive.”

“You don’t look like a very large man to have been tramping around with a prospector’s pack and covering a few thousand or so of miles,” was the remark made to Farrington.

“On a real tramp a big man carries more luggage than a little man will attempt. I have had big fellows leave me behind during the morning, and have come up to them when they were all in at noon,” said Farrington.

Game, Farrington declared, was always so plentiful that the prospector need not run out of provisions. Pheasant, rabbits, deer, and even moose, could be had almost as needed. Farrington traveled with a partner, to assist with the canoe over the portages, many of which were long and tiresome. For winter travel, sledges were used, frozen ground being necessary to the [illegible]

This tattered and unprepossessing newspaper cutting provided priceless information about Joseph’s life

Right: Joseph with his wife Lily

Learning From The Best

At the time, Samantha was doing a five-week online course with Pharos Tutors called ‘Are You Sitting Comfortably? Writing and Telling Your Family History’, run by regular *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* contributor Janet Few (**pharos tutors.com**). “It was a brilliant introduction to genealogy, and it encouraged me to examine what happened to Brightlingsea when transport and utilities came to the town.

“Joseph’s adventures inspired me to write about the Farringtons as part of my course work. I was thrilled when Pharos put my article online at **pharostutors.com/student-showcase-the-farringtons.**

“To help me with my research I visited Brightlingsea Museum, and its curator Margaret Stone was very helpful. Janet encouraged me to send her a copy of my finished piece.

“I had described Joseph’s brother Thomas as an enigma, because I hadn’t found any record of his life after 1902. This brick wall was smashed down after Margaret showed my written piece to Brightlingsea resident Keith Brown, who is related to Thomas’ wife Kate Richardson.

“Keith was in touch with Thomas’ grandson Donald Farrington in America, and realised that this was his family. Donald contacted me, and was able to explain the fascinating story of Thomas’ life.”

Thomas was a devout man, and always carried a family Bible

Like many mariners from the Colne Estuary, Thomas was hired by rich Americans to deliver yachts across the Atlantic. In 1905, Thomas, Kate and their two children decided to set up home in Fort Lee, New Jersey, on the banks of the Hudson River. They had six more children in the USA, four of whom survived.

Fort Lee was at that time the centre of the cinema industry before it moved to Hollywood. It was also the future location of the George Washington Bridge, which would link Fort Lee with New York City.

Thomas became captain of the private yacht *Vanadis*, which was owned by millionaire industrialist Cornelius Billings, and later served in the US Navy during the First World War.

On his release the family moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he became captain of the yacht *Miramar*, owned by hotelier Ellsworth Statler.

“Thomas was a devout man, and always carried a family Bible.

UNP/TIM MOSSFORD

"I love the sea," says Samantha, here photographed by Clevedon Pier with some of her family documents – including one of the priceless postcards

He was known as the 'Christian skipper', because he sought out a Methodist chapel in every port. Sadly, he drowned in 1925 when *Miramar* sank off Savannah, Georgia, during a tropical storm. He was aged only 50 at the time.

"Perhaps this was why Joseph decided to return to Britain in 1927. His brother's death may have had quite an impact."

Samantha's research was energised last year when her father Michael remembered that her late mother Maureen had kept a collection of old postcards. "I searched the house, and was delighted to find them bundled together in a brown envelope.

"One is a 1907 picture postcard of Thomas, the yacht captain, looking resplendent in his uniform. Others were sent by Joseph in Canada, and some by Frederick, my great grandfather. This proved the family legend that he had journeyed to America.

"My favourite is a card of the Florida Keys that Frederick posted in Havana, Cuba. It was sent to Marion and addressed 'Dear Mabel', which was obviously her nickname. It was lovely to discover this."

A Family Divided

"Frederick sailed to New York in 1911, and left behind his wife Nettie and daughters Marion and Muriel. I wonder how they coped with the separation?"

Frederick sent postcards from Fort Lee, where Thomas lived, and another from Glen Cove, a city in Nassau County, New York, in 1913. Two more were posted by Nettie, who must have joined Frederick at some point.

"I can't find a return sailing for Frederick, but he spent at least two years in America judging by the postmarks. Perhaps Nettie felt that emigration wasn't right for their family, because they returned to Britain and set up home in Chadwell St Mary, Essex, where Frederick worked as a boot repairer.

"I was fascinated to read Chloe O'Shea's 'Focus On' article about travel and passenger lists in the February 2024 issue of *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine*. This prompted me to peruse the Ellis Island Foundation's website (**statueofliberty.org**).

"I was amazed to see a record for Jane Farrington, Frederick's mother, who arrived in New York on the *Caronia* in 1906. The document contained details that I hadn't seen elsewhere."

Jane was 58 years old at the time, and described as being five foot three inches tall, with grey hair and eyes, and a scar on her right arm. The record even stated that she was carrying $66.

"She had travelled to see Thomas in Fort Lee, and I was so glad that she had made the journey. Jane may have been illiterate, because only her mark appears on Frederick's birth certificate, but she still made the journey to New York and back.

"I would love to have met her. She must have been a strong woman to have raised four sons when her husband Thomas was often away at sea for months."

Samantha is reminded of her relations' astonishing explorations today whenever she hears the cries of gull colonies on the Bristol Channel. The sea holds many stories.

Tell Your Story

Share your family story with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Resources

These three resources helped Samantha in her research

COURSE

Pharos Tutors

w **pharostutors.com**

Pharos offers a wide range of online courses to improve your genealogical research skills, and you can work at your own pace. Samantha found a course run by Janet Few extremely helpful.

MUSEUM

Brightlingsea Museum

a **Dove House, Station Road, Brightlingsea, Colchester, Essex CO7 0DT**
t 01206 307121
e *info@brightlingseamuseum.co.uk*
w **brightlingseamuseum.co.uk**

Brightlingsea Museum illustrates what life used to be like for the people of the Colne Estuary, many of whom built boats and risked their lives fishing from Brightlingsea Harbour. It's open from Easter to late December, and is free to visit.

WEBSITE

Ellis Island Foundation

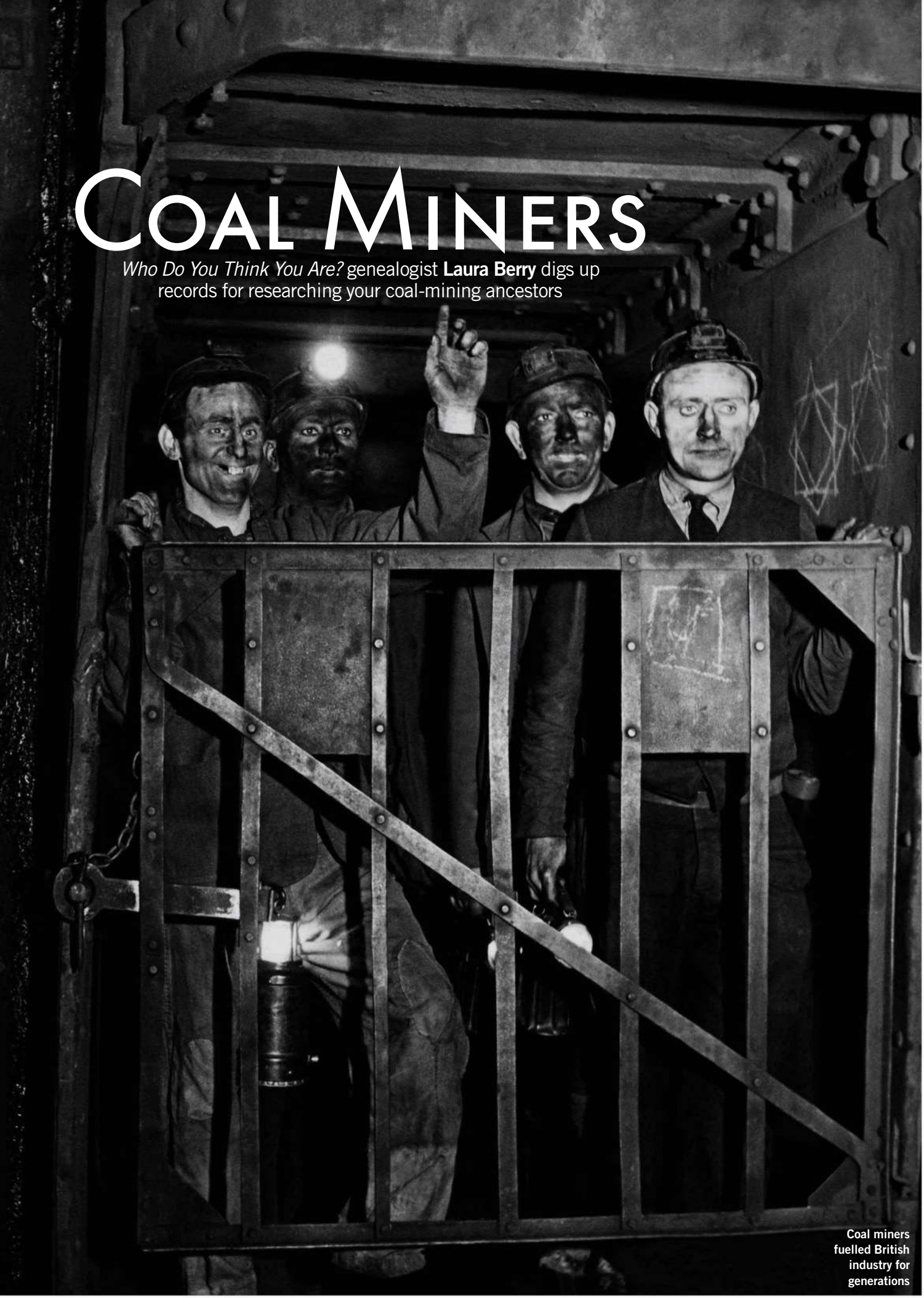
w **statueofliberty.org**

Samantha found personal details about her great great grandmother Jane Farrington on this website, which recorded her trip to New York in 1906. The database includes almost 65 million records of passengers arriving at the Port of New York between 1820 and 1957.

UNP/TIM MOSSFORD

Coal Miners

Who Do You Think You Are? genealogist **Laura Berry** digs up records for researching your coal-mining ancestors

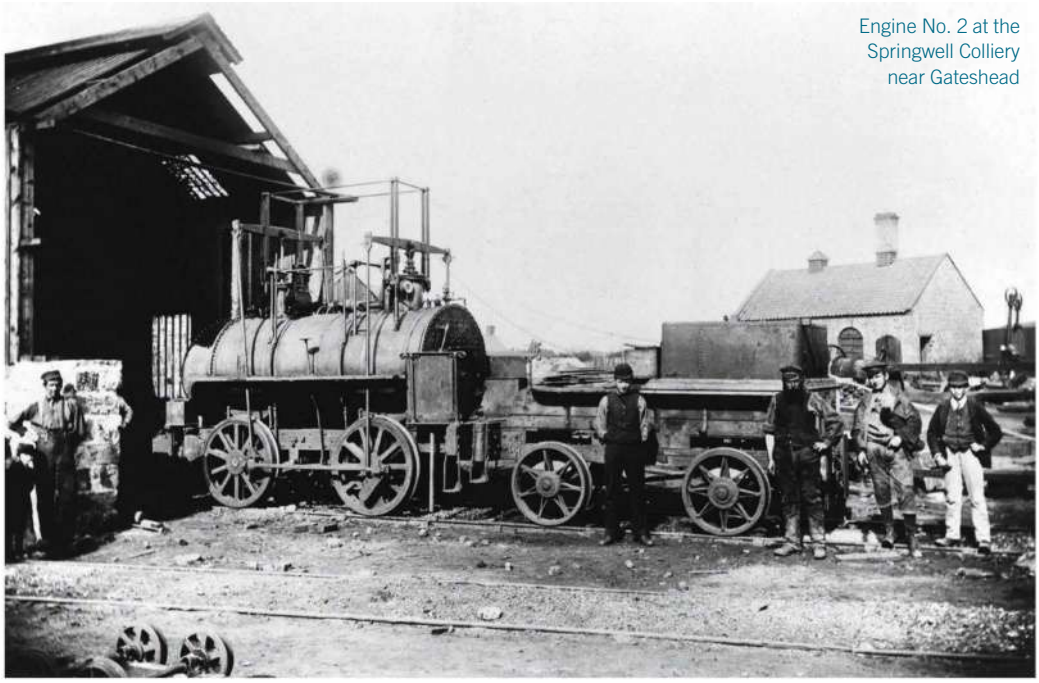


Coal miners fuelled British industry for generations

GETTY IMAGES

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM's) bitterly divisive 1984–1985 strike. It's a timely reminder of how hard our forebears fought to scratch a living both under and above ground at collieries that dotted the industrial landscape from the Highlands down to Dover.

Despite the history of coal mining in Britain stretching back hundreds of years, with more than one million workers employed by the early 20th century, locating surviving employment records for any era is not straightforward. You stand a better chance if your ancestor worked for the National Coal Board when the industry was nationalised between 1947 and 1994 (the NCB became the British Coal Corporation in 1987). Employment records, medical-history cards and notices of accidents or dangerous incidents for that period were centralised and might be obtained from Iron Mountain Records Management, although the archive is not open to the public (see 'Resources', page 36). If an ancestor continued to be employed after the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme (MPS) was introduced in 1952, then the MPS might retain historic records (see **mps-pension.org.uk**) but a National Insurance number would assist with any of these searches.



Engine No. 2 at the Springwell Colliery near Gateshead

Many records created by the NCB are held by The National Archives (TNA) at Kew in the series COAL, although these deal primarily with the administration of mine workings. That said, reports on explosions and accidents even before nationalisation are in series HO (Home Office) and POWE (Ministry of Power) – consult TNA's research guide at **nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/mines-mining**. Some NCB records were dispersed to county record offices, like the collection at Glamorgan Archives, which includes guides to using pithead baths and documents that set the scene for life in particular ▶

Emily Atack's Mining Ancestor

Laura helped to unearth the tragic story of Emily's great great grandfather Joseph Atack

Comedian and actor Emily Atack featured in Series 20 of *WDYTYA?* last year. Emily was told by her father that her great grandfather Bill Atack was a miner in the pits around Nostell, Wakefield, Yorkshire. His birth certificate revealed that he had been born in Nostell Cottage to Joseph Atack in 1884, and the 1881 census showed Joseph with his wife and an older son on Nostell Row. Joseph was a banksman who oversaw the men and materials going into and out of Nostell Colliery, and the mine's owner Lord St Oswald had built this terrace of cottages to house workers on his estate, not far from his stately home Nostell Priory.

Sadly a newspaper story from 1889 explained that Joseph had drowned himself in the dammed lake on the estate. An inquest heard that the 33-year-old banksman "fancied in his own mind that a recent accident at the colliery was attributable to his conduct, and that he would be committed for manslaughter. This was a delusion on his part."

A search of accident reports and indexes suggested that Joseph was most likely tormented by the death of Richard Brindle (sometimes Brundle) at Nostell three years earlier. The Mine Inspector's Report (see page 34) said that he had jumped on the pit cage as it was leaving the bottom of the shaft, and was crushed as it ascended. The banksman was responsible for operating the cage at the pithead and ensuring safe loading and unloading, but an inquest recorded that Brindle's death was indeed an accident, with no one at fault.

Emily's episode is still available on BBC iPlayer at **tinyurl.com/bbc-iplayer-wdytya-ea**

DID YOU KNOW?

Coal miners often moved between pits in search of better pay or conditions, so if you can't find your forebear in the records of one mine try the neighbouring pits.

collieries both during and before nationalisation (**https://glamarchives.gov.uk/blood/**).

Union Magazine

Some issues of the NCB's magazine *Coal* from 1947–1960 are on the website of the National Coal Mining Museum for England in Overton, West Yorkshire (**ncm.org.uk**) at **resources.ncm.org.uk**, with a regular feature 'Pit Profile' illustrating members of local communities. The museum's librarians can also help you research your mining kin.

Nearly 48,000 'Bevin Boys' were conscripted from all over the country to work in coal mines for the war effort from 1943 until 1948 by the minister of labour and national service Ernest Bevin. Derbyshire Record Office holds photographs and registers of trainees (**derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/record-office/derbyshire-record-office.aspx**), while records of some Bevin Boys have been donated to the Imperial War Museums (**iwm.org.uk**) and are described on the Bevin Boys Association's website at **bevinboysassociation.co.uk/inventory.html**. Further information about them can be discovered at The Forgotten Conscript (**theforgottenconscript.co.uk**) and Healey Hero (**healeyhero.co.uk**), which contains a wealth of information about regular coal miners too.

Records of some Bevin Boys have been donated to the Imperial War Museums

Coal mines were also briefly nationalised during the First World War, but when they returned to private ownership on 31 March 1921 the NUM's precursor the Miners' Federation of Great Britain refused the unfavourable employment terms offered by owners. The ensuing strike delayed the 1921 census, due to take place on 24 April. This is worth bearing in mind when consulting that census, which should give your ancestor's last place of work even if they were

Mine Inspector's Report, 1886

1 Date
The fatalities are listed by the date of the accident. This list covers March 1886 to May 1886.

2 Location
The name of the mine or colliery and its location are given. Here are details about a fatal accident at Nostell near Wakefield.

3 Owner's Name
The name of the person or firm who owned the mine can help you track down surviving records of the mine in local archives.

4 Persons Killed
The first name is sometimes reduced to an initial – remember this when searching indexes.

5 Description
The occupation and age given here are helpful for cross-referencing with other records.

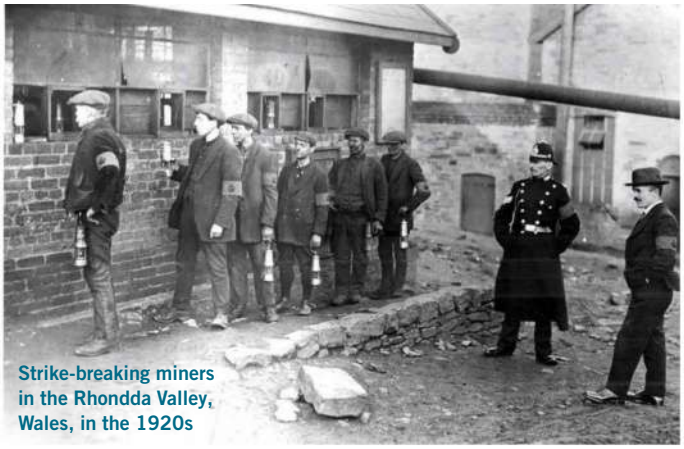
6 Cause Of Death
The information here contains more detail than Richard Brindle's death certificate or the newspaper report of the inquest.

List of Fatal Accidents—*continued.*

1 Date.	No. of Accidents.	Name of the Mine or Colliery.	Where situate.	Owner's or Company's Name.	Persons killed.	Occupation.
1886.						
Mar. 8	21	Carlton Main	Barnsley	Yorkshire and Derbyshire Coal and Iron Co.	S. Hodgson	Collier
,, 11	22	Sharlston	Normanton	New Sharlston Coal Co.	J. Edis	Loco. driver
,, 15	23	Whitwood	Ditto	H. Briggs, Son, and Co.	F. Featherstone	Coupler
,, 24	24	Shaw Cross	Dewsbury	Crawshaw and Warburton	W. Brooke	Collier
,, 30	25	Sinking Wood	Huddersfield	Joseph Haigh	W. Petch	Driver
				3	4	5
Apr. 1	26	Monckton Main	Barnsley	Monckton Main Coal Co.	Joseph Harris	Collier
,, 6	27	East Gawber	Ditto	R. Craik & Co.	F. Clifford	Hurrier
,, 8	[illegible]	Wheldale	Pontefract	Wheldale Coal Co.	J. Morris	Horse-keeper
,, 16	2	Nostell	Wakefield	Lord St. Oswald	R. Brindle	Collier
,, 17	30	Church Lane	Barnsley	Silkstone and Dodworth Coal & Iron Co.	J. Wiper	Bye-workman
May 7	31	Hemingfield	Rotherham	Earl Fitzwilliam	J. Swift	Collier
,, 10	32	Nunnery	Sheffield	Nunnery Coal Co.	J. Moat	Ditto
,, 11	33	Stanley	Wakefield	Victoria Coal & Coke Co.	F. Rudge	Ditto
,, 20	34	North Staveley	Sheffield	Aston Coal Co.	R. Gamble	Ditto
,, 21	35	Treeton	Rotherham	Rothervale Coal Co.	H. Bartholomew	Screener
,, 22	36	Denaby Main	Ditto	Denaby Main Coal Co.	R. Pattison	Labourer
,, 26	37	Kippax	Leeds	Locke & Co.	C. Firth	Bye-workman
,, 29	38	East Gawber	Barnsley	R. Craik and Co.	G. Taylor	Hanger-on

unemployed. The census was taken on 19 June during the strike, which was defeated later that month when miners agreed to accept lower wages.

Records of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and the NUM will be found at the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University (**warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc**), and various collections for these and other trade-union organisations are also located in the Working Class Movement Library in Salford (**wcml.org.uk/wcml/en/our-collections/working-lives/miners/**) and various university libraries where there's a good chance of finding material about active trade-union officials. The NUM retains some records from the 20th century at its base in Barnsley, South Yorkshire (**https://num.org.uk**). Directories for these repositories and an overview of their collections can be found via Discovery, TNA's online catalogue, at **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F246743**, while the National Library of Scotland has records from Scottish unions and cooperatives (**https://www.nls.uk/catalogues/labour-history/trade-unions/**).



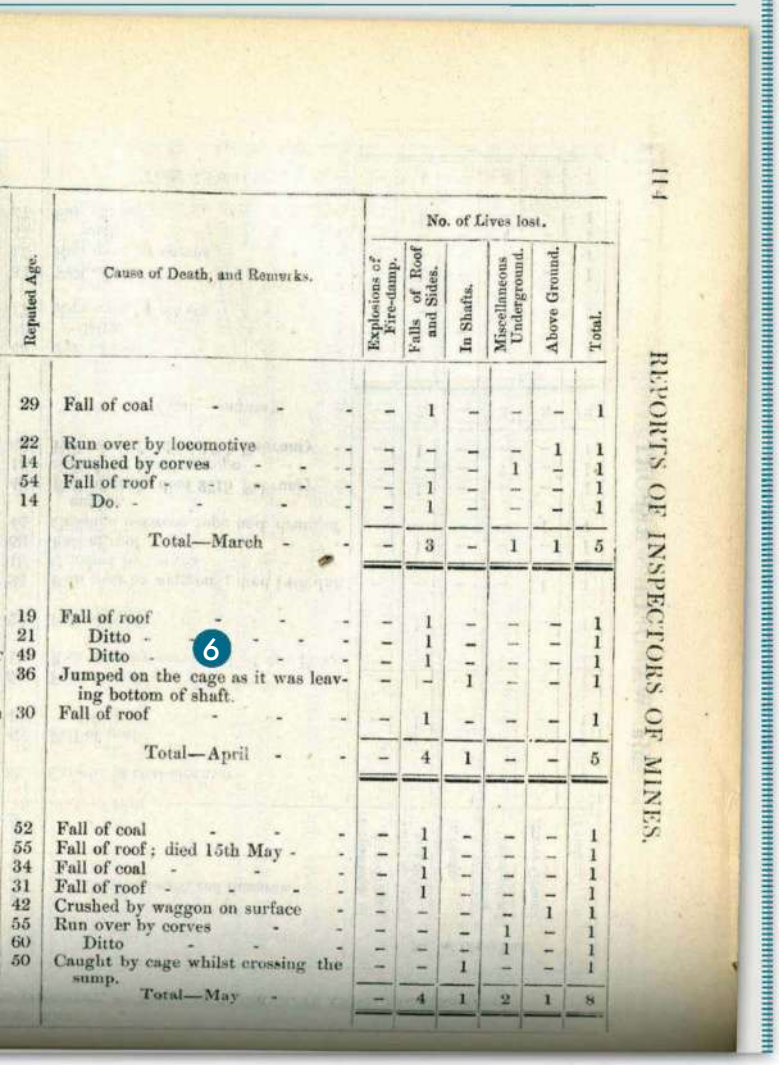
Strike-breaking miners in the Rhondda Valley, Wales, in the 1920s

Private Ownership

Most of our forebears who were miners prior to the mid-20th century would have been employed privately. Many worked in pits sunk by local landowners seeking maximum profit from their estates. The 1921 census provides our ancestors' employers' details, or if you're lucky this information might be volunteered on other records like the 1911 census. Where the mine is known, the next step is to search for surviving estate records, or company records if a corporation owned the mine. If the mine is not known then you can search for your ancestor's addresses and find surrounding mines using the maps on the website of the Northern Mine Research Society (**nmrs.org.uk/mines-map/index**), which also provide the owner's details.

Owners were not obliged to keep records of employees, but Discovery offers a gateway into the holdings of hundreds of regional archives where estate and company records have been deposited at the owners' discretion. For example, Discovery shows that wage books and administrative records for Nostell Colliery Co. Ltd are held by West Yorkshire Archive Service in Leeds, and its own catalogue at **catalogue.wyjs.org.uk** provides more detailed descriptions ▶

Annual reports listing fatal accidents form the basis of many indexes. This example from Emily Atack's episode is held by The National Archives (**nationalarchives.gov.uk**) in POWE 7/22



114 REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF MINES.

Reputed Age.	Cause of Death, and Remarks.	No. of Lives lost. Explosions of Fire-damp.	Falls of Roof and Sides.	In Shafts.	Miscellaneous Underground.	Above Ground.	Total.
29	Fall of coal	–	1	–	–	–	1
22	Run over by locomotive	–	–	–	–	1	1
14	Crushed by corves	–	–	–	1	–	1
54	Fall of roof	–	1	–	–	–	1
14	Do.	–	1	–	–	–	1
	Total—March	–	3	–	1	1	5
19	Fall of roof	–	1	–	–	–	1
21	Ditto	–	1	–	–	–	1
49	Ditto	–	1	–	–	–	1
36	Jumped on the cage as it was leaving bottom of shaft.	–	–	1	–	–	1
30	Fall of roof	–	1	–	–	–	1
	Total—April	–	4	1	–	–	5
52	Fall of coal	–	1	–	–	–	1
55	Fall of roof; died 15th May	–	1	–	–	–	1
34	Fall of coal	–	1	–	–	–	1
31	Fall of roof	–	1	–	–	–	1
42	Crushed by waggon on surface	–	–	–	–	1	1
55	Run over by corves	–	–	–	1	–	1
60	Ditto	–	–	–	1	–	1
50	Caught by cage whilst crossing the sump.	–	–	1	–	–	1
	Total—May	–	4	1	2	1	8

Expert Picks

Laura recommends these online resources for researching coal miners

Ancestry

w **ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/62506**

This accidents and deaths index can be searched by name, birthdate, date/location, role, employer and keyword.

Northern Mine Research Society

w **nmrs.org.uk**

View interactive maps of British collieries, a database listing sources, and an accidents and deaths index for 1900–1991.

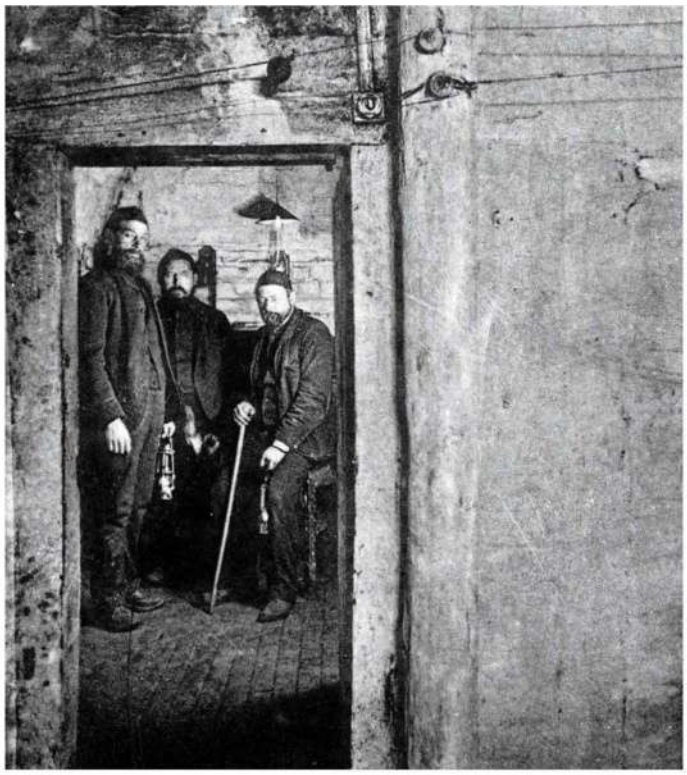
The Coalmining History Resource Centre

w **cmhrc.co.uk**

The resources here include regional coalfield maps, a helpful glossary, and accident and disaster reports.

of that collection dating back to the 17th century, although records of individual workers start in the 19th century.

Durham Record Office (DRO; **https://durhamrecordoffice.org.uk**) has significant holdings of mining records from the NCB and earlier records of the colliery companies it inherited upon nationalisation, as well as trade unions and employers' associations, like the Durham Miners' Association (DMA) archives that are shared between DRO and the North East England Mining Archive and Research Centre (NEEMARC) at University of Sunderland Library (**https://library.sunderland.ac.uk**); note, however, that DRO is closed to inquiries ahead of the opening of the new county archive and record office The Story at Mount Oswald Manor House on 14 June (**thestorydurham.org**). A name index complied partly from the DMA archive is searchable in the Mining Durham's Hidden Depths database at **durhamrecordoffice.org.uk/search-options/search-durhams-hidden-depths**, standing at 229,648 names.



Many millions of people worked in Britain's coal mines over the years

There are also lots of other regional websites such as Fife Pits (**fifepits.co.uk**) and organisations such as the Kent Mining Museum (**kentminingmuseum.co.uk**) with information about local mines, and sometimes indexes of workers' names like the Durham Mining Museum (**dmm.org.uk**). The National Association of Mining History Organisations' directories at **namho.org** promote some smaller groups with local knowledge. Swansea University's South Wales Coalfield Collection (**https://libguides.swansea.ac.uk/swml/collections**) is recommended if your ancestor was a miner in Glamorganshire, Carmarthenshire or Pembrokeshire, while information about collieries across Wales can be found at Welsh Coal Mines (**welshcoalmines.co.uk**); the site also has a busy and helpful forum.

There are photos of mines from across Scotland at the Scottish Mining Website (**scottishmining.co.uk**) as well as indexes to accidents and disasters. The National Mining Museum Scotland in Newtongrange, Midlothian, has a guide at **nationalminingmuseum.com/collections/research/family-history**, which reminds us that miners could travel significant distances to work. It also itemises the company records held by National Records Scotland (also see the NRS's own guide at **nrscotland.gov.uk/research/research-guides/research-guides-a-z/coal-mining-records**).

Determination can reap rewards when researching coal miners. The records may seem disparate, but there's plenty of material (much of it digitised) to shed light on individual lives.

Durham Record Office has significant holdings of mining records from the NCB

TOP TIP!

Search the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**) for contextual information about conditions in mines, accidents and community events.

LAURA BERRY is one of the *WDYTYA?* genealogists and the author of *Discover Your Ancestors' Occupations* (2015)

RESOURCES

Take your research further

ARCHIVE

IRON MOUNTAIN
a PO Box 3238, Stafford ST16 9LS
t 0844 264 1486
e *britishcoalrecords@ironmountain.co.uk*
w **ironmountain.com/en-gb**
The firm holds the records of the NCB/British Coal Corporation. To inquire, quote a full name, birthdate and (if known) the colliery.

BOOKS

My Ancestor Was a Coalminer, Third Edition
David Tonks
Society of Genealogists, 2014
Learn more about sources.

Tracing Your Coalmining Ancestors
Brian Elliott
Pen & Sword, 2014
Elliott includes case studies.

MUSEUMS

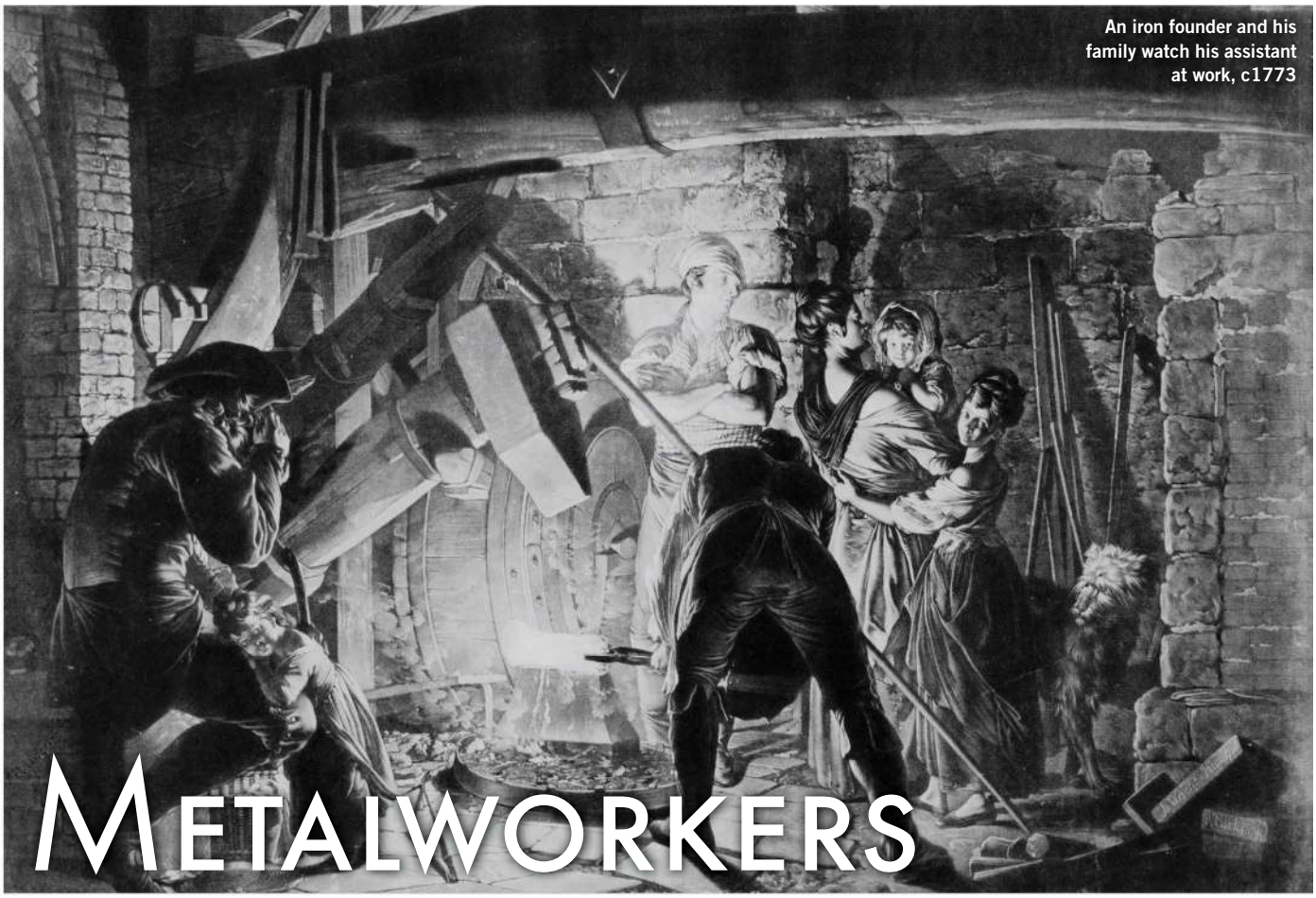
BIG PIT NATIONAL COAL MUSEUM
a Blaenafon, Torfaen NP4 9XP
t 0300 111 2333
e *bigpit@museumwales.ac.uk*
w **museum.wales/bigpit**
Take an underground tour of this former mine in Wales.

NATIONAL COAL MINING MUSEUM FOR ENGLAND
a Caphouse Colliery, New Road, Overton, Wakefield WF4 4RH
t 01924 848806
e *info@ncm.org.uk*
w **ncm.org.uk**
The museum's website includes themed galleries.

WEBSITE

GENGUIDE
w **tinyurl.com/genguide-coal**
This site has lists of primary and secondary sources.

GETTY IMAGES



An iron founder and his family watch his assistant at work, c1773

METALWORKERS

Jonathan Scott picks some of the key sites for blacksmiths and related occupations

There are numerous words that can be grouped under the term 'metalworker'. The word vulcan, for example, was often associated with a blacksmith or metalworker. A clipper clipped the edges of coins, melting down the fragments to make counterfeit money. A millwright was traditionally a carpenter who built and maintained windmills and watermills, but it came to be a term for anyone who maintained industrial machinery. And a metal man maintained underground rails and tunnels in coal mines.

If you see an unfamiliar term in a record, it's a good idea to check a dictionary of old occupations. Try genealogist Jane Hewitt's dictionary at **familyresearcher.co.uk/glossary/Dictionary-of-Old-Occupations-Index.html**, or the digitised official *Dictionary of Occupational Terms* compiled by the Ministry of Labour from the 1921 census (**doot.spub.co.uk**).

Finally alongside the homeworking tinker and traditional village smith, there are thousands more who were employed in vast factories and foundries, the records of which may well survive at the local county archive.

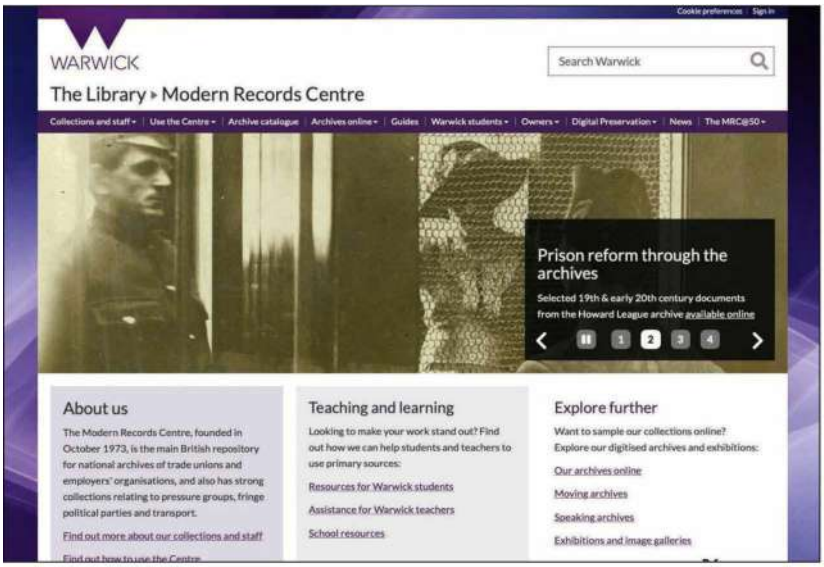
GETTY IMAGES

SCOTTISH POST OFFICE DIRECTORIES

w **digital.nls.uk/directories**

Trade directories are among the most useful sources for metalworkers. Although they won't mention workers employed in large factories and foundries, any owners, smaller specialist concerns and workshops are relatively likely to appear. This National Library of Scotland site gives free access to more than 700 Scottish directories (1773–1911). The search facility at **digital.nls.uk/directories/browse/** is primarily for surnames, but the best way to search by occupation is to scroll down and click the hyperlinks for 'Scotland', 'Counties' or 'Towns'. Here you can select individual volumes, from where you can then click the 'Search within' box, and trawl by trade, occupation or keyword. See the 'Go Further' box on page 39 for sites with directories for the rest of the UK.

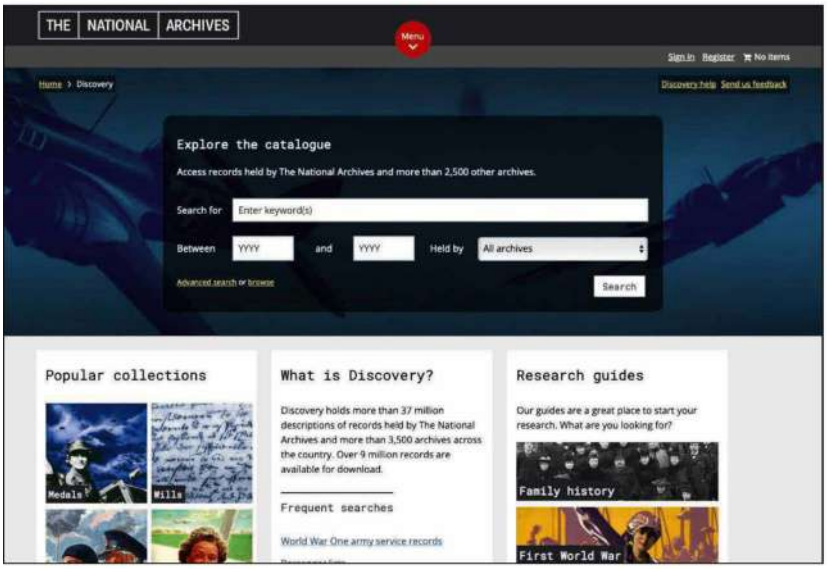
BEST WEBSITES



MODERN RECORDS CENTRE

w **warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc**

If you can't find any employment records for your metalworking ancestor, it might be worth seeking out trade unions. The University of Warwick's Modern Records Centre holds the largest collection of trade-union archives in the country. This includes the Trades Union Congress (TUC), as well as hundreds of regional and specialist unions. Here you can research the lineage of each union, discovering when it was formed, and whether it still operates or has been swallowed up by a larger organisation. Keep in mind that many unions would be named by place first, trade second – such as the Manchester Society of Braziers and Sheet Metal Workers.



DISCOVERY

w **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**

If your interests lie in larger-scale heavy industry, then cross-archive catalogues such as The National Archives' Discovery will be invaluable for finding references in county record offices, museums or specialist archives. For example searching for records of the engineering giant GKN Sankey leads to entries across several archives in Birmingham, Plymouth, Reading, Warwick, Wirral and Wolverhampton. You can then click the name of an individual archive to see a description and reference. It's always worth following this trail because you might well find that records have been digitised, transcribed or indexed, and made available through the archive's own catalogue.

EXPERT'S CHOICE

Adèle Emm, author of *Tracing Your Trade and Craftsman Ancestors* (2015)

A workman in Sydney, Australia, forges poles for the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, 1930

Ann Spiro's long-running and recently updated Blacksmiths Index (**blacksmiths.mygenwebs.com**) is a hotchpotch of fantastic information about metalworkers of every kind from all over the world. The site is built around a database of references to several thousand workers drawn from a variety of sources – census entries, newspapers, trade directories and the like. While the primary focus is the UK, there are now sections for American, Australian, Canadian, European and New Zealand smiths too. The breadth has also expanded to include other trades such as anchorsmiths and boilermakers; gold-, silver- and pewtersmiths; locksmiths; and millwrights.

The site contains details of smiths from across the globe

You can explore entries via a combined surname index (although it seems to be incomplete), trade or geographical area. Some of the entries are little more than name, trade, date and usually an address. Others have almost complete biographies.

For example the entry for London blacksmith James Morrisby records how he was tried at the Old Bailey for stealing a 10 lb iron bar in the summer of 1784. Found guilty, he was sentenced to seven years' transportation, and sent to New South Wales on the First Fleet vessel *Scarborough*. He eventually settled in Tasmania as a farmer: "He took up land on the Clarence Plains (now Rokeby) across the Derwent River from Hobart."

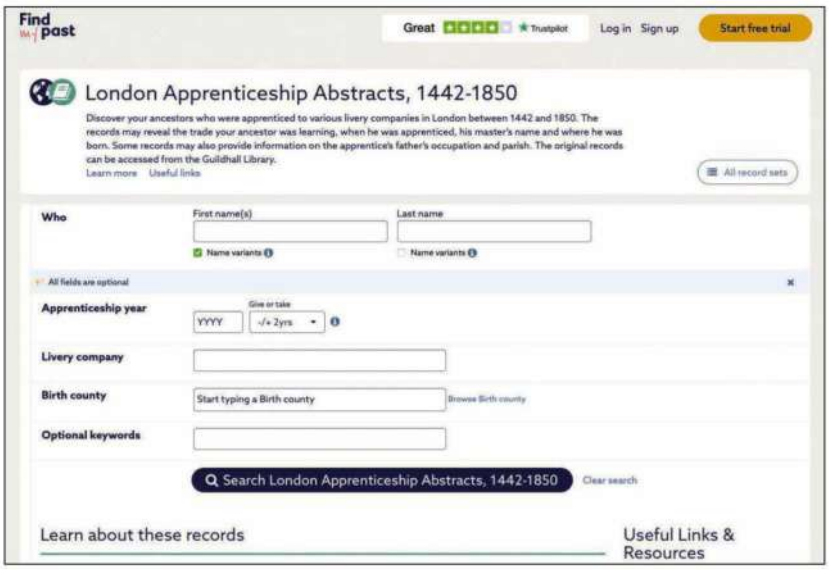
Genealogists are encouraged to add their own family stories to the site via the online contribution form – be prepared to provide supporting documentation if possible. And you'll notice that some entries have email links, meaning that the contributor in question is happy to be contacted by other researchers.

GETTY IMAGES

WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT LIBRARY

w **wcml.org.uk**

The website of this library in Salford, Greater Manchester, is filled with interesting content, from blogs and virtual tours, to exhibitions and the "Object of the Moment" feature. For this issue's topic, navigate to **wcml.org.uk/our-collections/working-lives**. Here you'll find articles on different professions, from bakers to stonemasons, as well as various metalworking trades. This includes blacksmiths, a word most associated with the local smithy making horseshoes and tools, but also used for railway workers, and employees of engineering firms and shipyards. There are sections relating to boilermakers and shipwrights, with each page describing the potential sources.



FINDMYPAST

w **bit.ly/fmp-webb-livery**

Most City of London livery companies have moved away from the traditional trades that inspired them. The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths originally set the regulations and standards for blacksmiths in the capital, and Findmypast's vast collection 'London Apprenticeship Abstracts, 1442–1850' includes more than 13,000 blacksmith apprenticeships (1594–1804). The site has several other occupational resources that might prove useful. Its partnership with the Modern Records Centre has produced collections of digitised images of record books from 26 unions, such as the United Society of Boilermakers and Iron Shipbuilders – see **bit.ly/fmp-trad**.

Go Further

These sites can also help with metalworking kin

ARCHIVES HUB

w **archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk**

Find physical and digital sources held in more than 390 institutions across the UK, including archives of specialist bodies such as the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

COMPANY OF CUTLERS IN HALLAMSHIRE

w **cutlers-hallamshire.org.uk/the-company-is/**

The company was established in 1624. You can explore a company index via the site Sheffield Indexers (**sheffieldindexers.com**) – just click 'Apprentices & Freemen' in the sidebar.

HISTORICAL DIRECTORIES

w **tinyurl.com/uni-leicester-sco-direct**

The University of Leicester's Special Collections Online offers free access to digitised trade directories from across England and Wales.

LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES

w **tinyurl.com/lma-search-albion**

LMA's catalogue can help you find records of livery companies, and material from individual firms such as Albion Iron and Wire Works.

MUSEUM OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE

w **reading.ac.uk/merl**

MERL has collections relating to all kinds of rural occupations including blacksmithing.

PICTURE THE PAST

w **tinyurl.com/picturethepast-working-lives**

Image libraries showcasing local photographic collections often have galleries about working life. This East Midlands site is a good example.

PRONI STREET DIRECTORIES

w **streetdirectories.proni.gov.uk**

This website from the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland allows you to search directories from Belfast and Ulster by surname or keyword.

TRADE UNION ANCESTORS

w **unionancestors.co.uk**

Mark Crail's site has an A-to-Z listing of UK trade unions that have existed in the past 200 years.

Crosslé Genealogical Abstracts

Genealogist **Nicola Morris** explains why this online collection is an important resource if you've hit a brick wall in your Irish research

The Crosslé Genealogical Abstracts were created by Irish engineer Philip Crosslé (1875–1953) and his father, Dr Francis C Crosslé. Both professional men, they also collected copies, abstracts and transcripts of historical and genealogical records found during a lifetime of researching family and local history.

Many of the documents that they transcribed were held in the Public Record Office of Ireland in Dublin, which was destroyed by fire in 1922 during the Irish Civil War. Their notes and notebooks can be used as a substitute for many of the lost records, particularly 17th- and 18th-century wills and administrations, early 19th-century census returns, and court records.

The notes, copies, abstracts and transcripts are in a number of Irish repositories, such as the National Archives of Ireland (NAI; the successor to the Public Record Office of Ireland) in Dublin; the National Library of Ireland (NLI), also in Dublin; the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) in Belfast; and local libraries in Armagh and Newry, where much of the Crosslés' research was focused.

Key Online Collection

The Crosslé material that today's researchers are most familiar with has been published online by Findmypast as the 'Crossle Genealogical Abstracts': **search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/crossle-genealogical-abstracts**. These abstracts are taken from the extensive Crosslé collection deposited in the NAI and reportedly amount to 661,654 records, although a record might be no more than a line of text entered in a notebook.

Some of the Crosslé material, microfilmed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, can also be viewed for free via the online catalogue at FamilySearch (**familysearch.org**), but unlike the records on Findmypast it has not been indexed.

A very large component of the Findmypast collection are the abstracts and transcripts of now lost prerogative and diocesan wills and administrations, which extend back as far as the early 17th century.

The collection also includes abstracts from the Bill Books for the Courts of Exchequer and Chancery, an incredibly valuable copy of what was lost in 1922. However, they only list the parties to the case, the date and the court, and not the details of the case itself. This means that if you are researching a family who were involved in multiple cases then the abstracts,

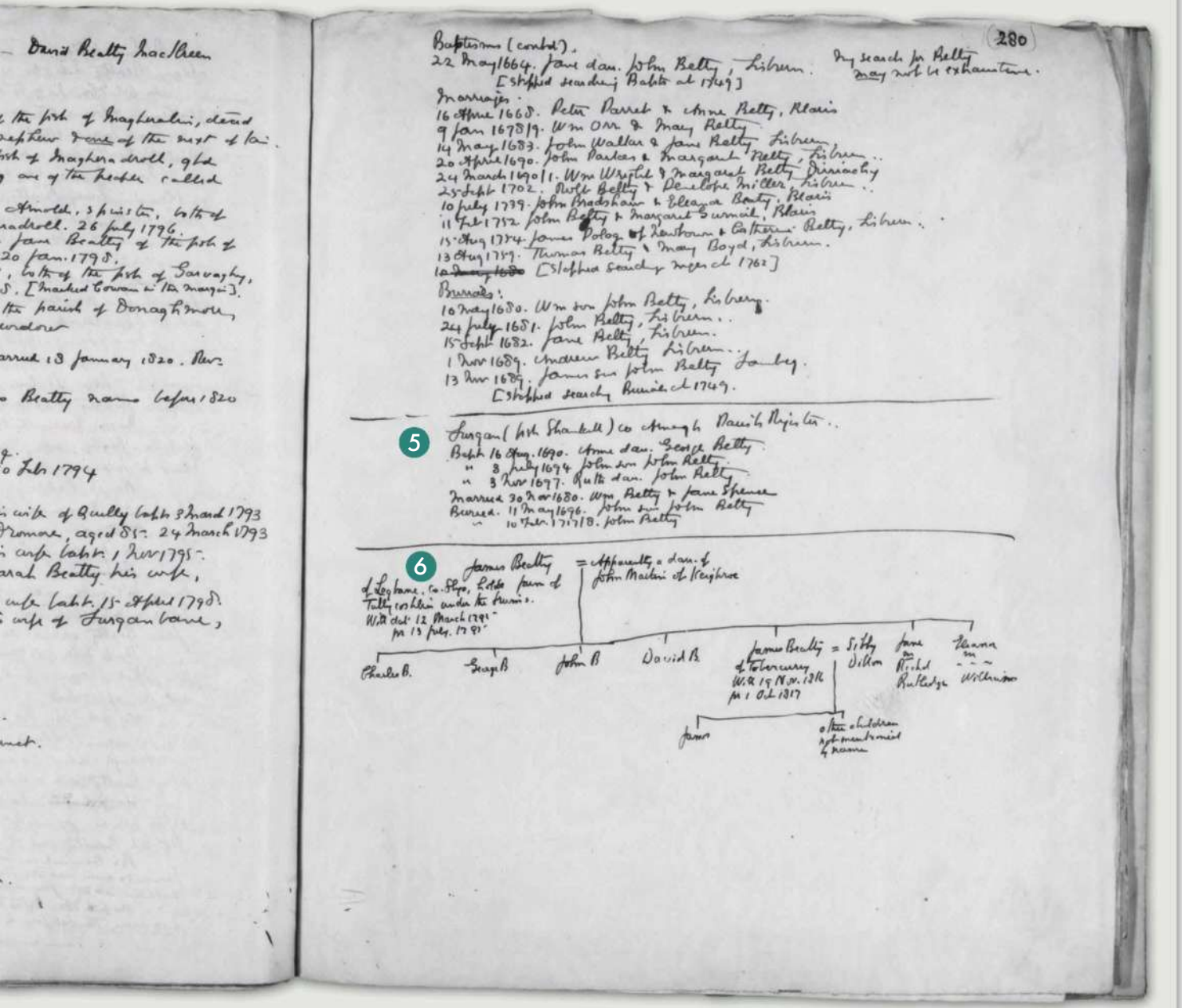
The notes, copies, abstracts and transcripts are in a number of Irish repositories

Crosslé Abstracts

1 Index
Here the Beatty entry in the Index to Marriage Licence Bonds for the Diocese of Down and Connor is noted.

2 Dromore
Abstracts of Dromore Grant Book wills, administrations and marriage licences (1790–1814) are featured in this section.

These abstracts containing details of the Beatty family are taken from notebooks held by the National Archives of Ireland (NAI) and available digitally on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**)



3 **Parochial Returns**
These extracts of Beatty baptisms, marriages and burials have been taken from various parish registers.

4 **Lisburn**
Here we see 17th-century Beatty baptisms, marriages and burials from the Lisburn Church of Ireland register.

5 **Lurgan**
The Lurgan Church of Ireland register was the source of this set of entries.

6 **Family Tree**
The Crosslés also included some sketch pedigrees.

which are not terribly informative, can severely clog up your search results.

Census Extracts

Also within this collection are details from early 19th-century census returns, providing names, ages, occupations and addresses from 1821 and the decades thereafter. In addition, the Crosslés extracted memorials from the Registry of Deeds recording property transfers, and while this collection survives intact, the Crosslés' abstracts can offer a shortcut to what can be a tedious and time-consuming search.

The Findmypast material includes extracts from parish registers, grant books and military records too.

All of these abstracts were created while the Crosslés pursued documentation for specific families, and they included sketch pedigrees for these families as well. If your own family dovetails with their specific research ▶

An explosion at the Four Courts in Dublin on 30 June 1922 – the resulting fire destroyed the Public Record Office of Ireland

▶ interests then a wealth of material, much of which has since been lost, will be found. However, in gathering material for these families they also recorded other individuals who were party to bequests, transactions, court cases and other events.

Crosslés concentrated on. Alternatively, you can use a keyword search, for example '1821 census' or 'baptism'.

Tips For Place Names

Place names can also be employed in your search, but it is helpful to know what types of place names might appear in the records extracted. A barony or parish may identify census or church records, or a townland might be referenced in a deed or will. However, be wary of the spelling of place names; these can fall foul of the shorthand employed in the notebooks, which have been transcribed indiscriminately.

Although the names in the text have been indexed at Findmypast, it is essential that the image of the notebook is inspected, because there is little context provided in the online transcript. Note that the handwriting can be challenging, and to interpret the source of a particular abstract you may need to go forward and back through the pages to locate headings and references.

Although the collection is huge, it really only relates to specific families

Findmypast's abstracts can be searched by family name and I would recommend starting with a surname only, before narrowing the results by first name. You can also browse the collection by file name, which are largely surnames that the Crosslés concentrated on.

TOP TIP!

The Crosslés' volumes, notes and notebooks are in multiple repositories. So if they've documented a relevant family, search the various catalogues including FamilySearch.

Another caveat is that although the collection is huge, it really only relates to specific families. Those that were recorded in wills, deeds and Church of Ireland parish registers were often higher up the socioeconomic ladder, and you are unlikely to find many references to the rural Catholic labouring or small-farming class.

NICOLA MORRIS is a director of Timeline Research (**timeline.ie**) and has appeared on numerous episodes of *WDYTYA?*

Resources

Take your research further

ARTICLES

INDEX OF WILL ABSTRACTS IN THE GENEALOGICAL OFFICE, DUBLIN

w **jstor.org/stable/25511851**

The digital library JSTOR has *Analecta Hibernica* No. 17 (1949), which contains an index by P Beryl Eustace of wills found in the Crosslé papers in the Genealogical Office (now part of the NLI). You can access the index if you create a free account.

REGISTERS OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEWRY, CO. DOWN 1779–1796

w **https://www.irishfamilyhistorycentre.com/product/the-irish-ancestor/**

Genealogist Rosemary Ffolliott produced the journal *The Irish Ancestor* (1969–1986) containing transcriptions of many sources, including the aforementioned registers in Volume XI No. 1 (1979). A PDF with every volume can be viewed for free online, and bought if you want a permanent copy. Also an index of surnames in the journal can be downloaded from **irishancestors.ie/the-irish-ancestor**.

WEBSITE

SOURCES FOR IRISH WOMEN'S HISTORY

w **tinyurl.com/imc-irish-cross**

This database, published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission, contains 20,790 records and 2,413 collections from 221 repositories, and has catalogued a number of the Crosslés' papers in various archives and libraries.

GETTY IMAGES

Q&A

Our team of experts offers tips and inspiration Edited By Claire Vaughan

Dave Annal is a genealogist, author and lecturer

Katherine Cobb is a member of AGRA based in Somerset

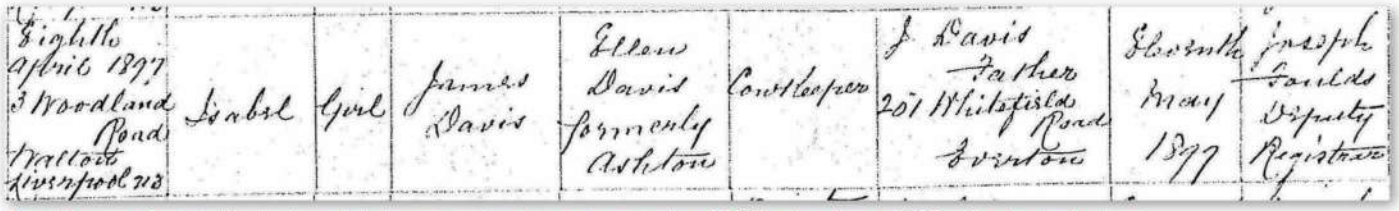
Rebecca Probert is professor of law at the University of Exeter

Jayne Shrimpton is a professional dress historian and portrait specialist

Steve Thomas is a genealogist with over 20 years' experience

Phil Tomaselli is a military family history expert and author

Can you help me uncover the identity of Helena and Isabella's parents?



The birth record for Isabel Davis shows that she was registered in the June quarter of 1897, rather than in 1898 as Stephen had believed

Q My grandmother, Helena Annie Davis, was born on 4 December 1890. Last year I discovered that she had a brother, Peter Randolph Davis. She also had a sister, Isabella Daisy Davies (born 5 April 1898). I have been unable to find birth certificates for either Helena or Isabella. Peter's birth certificate records his parents as James Davis and Ellen Ashton, although I can find no evidence of a marriage. James Davis appears to have died in 1895 (so was possibly not the father of Isabella). After the First World War, Peter and Helena lived with Ellen Ashton and, possibly, William James Davies at 12 Gleave Street, Liverpool.

Can you help me find birth certificates for Helena and Isabella and confirm who their parents were?

Stephen Bone

A One of the most important lessons we can learn as family historians is that we need to be flexible in our research. In this case, your grandmother, who you knew as Helena Annie Davis, was actually registered as Ellen Ann Davies. And because she was born in December 1890, her birth wasn't registered until the following quarter. The record of her birth appears in the General Register Office (GRO) index for the March quarter of 1891 under the reference West Derby 8b 425. Just to complicate matters further, Helena/Ellen was baptised (on 22 February 1891 at St Mary's, Walton-on-the-Hill) as Eleanor Anne Davis!

She was one of five children of James Davis/Davies and Ellen Ashton. They had married in 1887 (GRO reference: March 1887 West Derby 8b 725) and the birth of their first child, Agnes, was registered in the same quarter, although Agnes sadly died the following year.

Next came William James in 1889, and then your grandmother Ellen Ann in 1890.

Peter Randloph (as you know) was born in 1893, and finally there was Isabel, whose birth was registered in the June quarter of 1897 (not 1898). Despite James' apparent death in 1895, his name is recorded on her birth certificate.

Census returns can also help with problems like this. At the time of the 1891 census, James and Ellen were living at 3 Woodland Road, Walton-on-the-Hill, together with their two surviving children William James (aged two) and Ellen Ann (four months old).

Also in the household were James' widowed sister-in-law Margaret and her two daughters Eleanor and Alice, in addition to a 33-year-old servant by the name of James Turbot.

So, the lesson here is to always allow for variant spellings of names in your searches.

David Annal

The lesson here is to allow for variant spellings of names in your searches

HAVE YOU HIT A BRICK WALL? Please email your questions or family photographs to the following address: **wdytyaquestions@ourmedia.co.uk**

If selected, your query will be answered on these pages. Please note that we receive a large volume of correspondence each month, and cannot reply to each message individually. You are more likely to receive a response if you keep the question and background information concise (no more than 150 words), with a clear goal of enquiry.

Why were two sets of banns read before Sarah Lanfear's wedding?

No. 120 } Arthur Stanton of this Pariſh
and Sarah Lanfear also of this parish were
Married in this Church by Banns
this twelfth Day of October in the Year One Thouſand eight Hundred
and two By me Thos. Greenwood Vicar
This Marriage was ſolemnized between Us { The Mark of Arthur Stanton
The Mark of Sarah Lanfear
In the Preſence of { The Mark of Isaac Rose
The Mark of Anne Stanton

Sarah Lanfear and Arthur Stanton married on 12 October 1802, but Linda found banns from 1799 as well

Q My 5x great grandmother, Sarah Lanfear, married Arthur Stanton on 12 October 1802 in Calne, Wiltshire. There were two lots of banns read – in 1799 and 1802. Bastardy records for Sarah Langfear of Calne in 1800 mention two unnamed children. Sarah also appears in a calendar of prisoners for Calne in Devizes Prison in October 1800, and January and April 1801. Was the first wedding cancelled because she was in prison? A Robert Lanfear married in Calne in 1841, and his father was John Willis. Was Robert Sarah's son and John Willis his father?
Linda Kent

A Indexes and transcripts from a variety of sources form the collection 'Wiltshire Social & Institutional Records 1123–1968' on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**). For anyone with local ancestry it's a resource worth investigating, as is the site's 'Wiltshire Quarter Session Calendars 1728–1890'.

Although Sarah appears in the calendar of prisoners her status is unclear, since according to the quarter-sessions calendar she was "accused or convicted". The source documents are not available online, but you can view them at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre (**wshc.org.uk**). Search, too, for additional sources, such as quarter-sessions records or admission and discharge registers for Devizes Prison. If the registers survive, they could throw light on whether Sarah's imprisonment was the reason the marriage did not occur in 1799.

Local newspapers can be searched online via the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**) and Findmypast if you're a 'Pro' subscriber, and regularly carried reports of bastardy cases and quarter sessions. Unfortunately, I was unable to find any reference to Sarah.

Bastardy documents rarely include the child's name. Nevertheless, by searching for his baptism, it was possible to establish that Robert Lanfear was Sarah's son. The Calne parish register is unusual, in that it includes the name of the reputed father for the baptisms of illegitimate children. The baptism of "Robert son of Sarah Lanfear" on 30 November 1788 is annotated "Bastard born October 8th the reputed father is Robert Willis of Devizes Labr". Although the father's first name differs from that given at Robert's marriage, the baptism and marriage surely refer to the same person.
Katherine Cobb

What does this tracer card tell us?

Q This photograph shows a Second World War Royal Artillery tracer card for Sidney Ernest Whitney. Can you explain what it tells us, and why the initial unit is crossed through?
Jo Kelly

N.S.
No. 945670
Name WHITNEY Sidney Ernest
Enlisted 16 OCT 1939
Unit ~~4th Fld. Trg Rgt.~~ R.A.
71 Fld Rgt. Z
O/Seas 5/1/43
1496/45 X list (2) CMF. 26/11/45.
1496/45. 71. F. Regt. 28/11/45
Release 259/46 Y Release 31/1/46
Release 800/46 Z. T. Reserve 6/5/46

Sidney's tracer card shows where he served during the Second World War

A The card shows that Sidney enlisted on 16 October 1939. He probably attended several training units for basic military training but, once he was posted to the Royal Artillery, he became the responsibility of the Royal Artillery Record Office, which received his documents and updated his details. To do this quickly, a tracer card was created on which details were scribbled for clerks to look up without consulting his actual record. The first detail recorded was his posting to the 4th Field Training Regiment. However, when he went abroad to fight, the name of the regiment was crossed out.

Card details can be used to discover where a soldier served during the Second World War. To find War Diaries covering his service, go to The National Archive's (TNA's) online catalogue Discovery at **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**. Click 'Advanced search', type 71 Field Regiment Royal Field Artillery War Diary into the 'All of these words' field, and restrict the date range of the search to 1939–1946.

This produces 11 records at TNA, but arranging them in chronological order we see that when Sidney first went abroad (5 January 1943), the diary (reference WO 175/333) covers 1 January–30 June 1943; the '175' shows they were in Tunisia. Next is WO 169/9494 for July–December 1943, '169' meaning North Africa, Sicily or Italy. WO 170/956 covers January–April and July–September 1944 in Italy (170), and in May and June they were in North Africa (WO 169/16022). They served in Italy throughout 1945 (WO 170/4749).

A visit to TNA is necessary to see the War Diaries. Some of them may be on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**), but the indexing is dreadful. By November 1945, Sidney was preparing to go home (X and Y Lists). He was finally discharged in May 1946.
Phil Tomaselli

Picture Analysis

Was this photograph taken before or after my grandmother was born?

Q This photograph shows my great grandfather, Alfred Greenham, with his wife Mary née Bolston. Can you tell me if it was taken before, or after, the birth of their daughter Violet, my grandmother, in 1906? Alfred and Mary were married in 1903, but I don't think that this is a wedding photo because Alfred looks very casual.
Helen Green

A By the early 20th century, even humble working people might visit a commercial photographer once or twice to mark special occasions in their lives. I can confirm that this professional portrait, taken evidently in Southsea (near Portsmouth), very likely originated around the time of Alfred and Mary's engagement or actual marriage in 1903: well before Violet's birth in 1906.

Although elements of the 'white wedding' were increasingly being adopted throughout society, in the early 1900s many young couples tying the knot simply donned new or good fashionable daytime outfits, visiting a local photographic studio after the marriage ceremony or while on honeymoon.

Mary wears the neat blouse and tailored skirt ensemble popular in the early 1900s, her dark-coloured garments lending a suitably formal air. Alfred's pose may look casual, but he wears a respectable three-piece tailored lounge suit: the customary 'Sunday best' attire of the ordinary working man. His bow tie is a smart choice of neckwear, his prominent watch chain a business-like accessory. The fashionable style of their outfits confirms that the photo dates from the early Edwardian era.
Jayne Shrimpton

1 FORMAT
This photograph is formally presented as a large-format print on stout (but brittle) card with a wide border surrounding the image, a common choice for special pictures in the early 1900s.

2 COMPOSITION
This composition is typical of betrothal or wedding studio photographs, the pose intimate and the lady standing while the (taller) man is seated, bringing their heads closer.

3 OUTFIT
Mary's outfit displays the fashionable turn-of-the-century hourglass silhouette, featuring a tightly cinched waistband, a full-fronted blouse that accentuates the bust, and a gently flaring skirt.

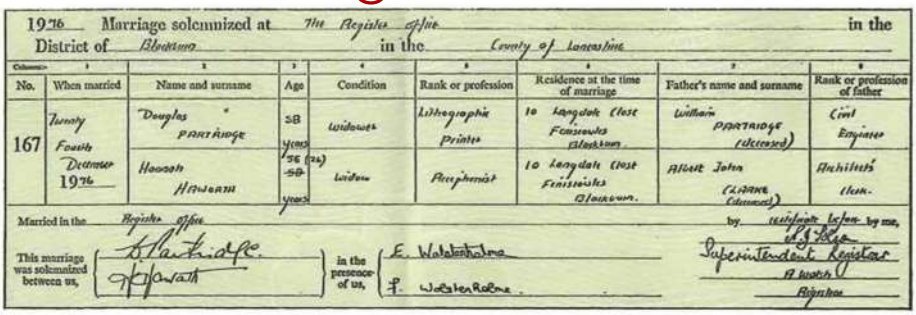
4 BLOUSE
The construction of Mary's blouse can be precisely dated to c1901–1904. The crucial details that provide clues to the date include its high collar, fitted yoke, vertical tucks and narrow upper sleeves that are wider toward the wrists and gathered into cuffs to finish.

5 RINGS
Engagement/wedding bands were usually clearly displayed, yet Mary's ring finger is concealed by Alfred's lapel. So perhaps she had no personal rings proclaiming her status.

6 SUIT
The narrow-moderate cut of Albert's tailored suit and his striped silk bow tie were both fashionable in the early 1900s.

Was my father-in-law a bigamist?

Q What evidence was required to prove status when applying to marry in 1976? My father-in-law left before I met my late husband in 1973, and passed away in 1981. The informant on his death certificate was his stepdaughter, suggesting that he remarried. The certificate for his second marriage showed him to be a widower. However, this was untrue, because my mother-in-law outlived him. So was his second marriage legal?
Dianne Partridge


1976 Marriage solemnized at The Register office in the District of Blackburn in the County of Lancashire

No.	When married	Name and surname	Age	Condition	Rank or profession	Residence at the time of marriage	Father's name and surname	Rank or profession of father
167	Twenty Fourth December 1976	Douglas PARTRIDGE	58 years	Widower	Lithographic Printer	10 Langdale Close Fenisowles Blackburn	William PARTRIDGE (deceased)	Civil Engineer
		Hannah HAWORTH	56 (26) years	Widow	Receptionist	10 Langdale Close Fenisowles Blackburn.	Albert John CLARKE (deceased)	Architect's Clerk.

Married in the Register office by certificate before by me, S. J. Solan Superintendent Registrar A Worth Registrar

This marriage was solemnized between us, D. Partridge. H. Haworth in the presence of us, E. Walsterholme. F. Walsterholme

Did Dianne's father-in-law marry for the second time without getting a divorce from his first wife?

A You could check whether there was a divorce by applying for a copy of the decree absolute (for details see **www.gov.uk/copy-decree-absolute-final-order**). This is not cheap, so you should first consider the likelihood of a divorce having been granted.

By 1976 it was relatively easy to get a divorce, since the 1969 Divorce Reform Act removed the need for the petitioning spouse to show that the other was at fault. Under the new Act, many divorces were granted based simply on five years' separation. Even so, divorce was not a unilateral act: if your father-in-law had petitioned for divorce, then notice of that petition should have been sent to your mother-in-law. You'll need to assess whether it is possible that notice could have been sent without her receiving it – eg if she had moved house since her husband had left.

Of course, the fact that he described himself as a widower suggests that there had not been a divorce. After all, by the mid-1970s divorce was sufficiently common that it is unlikely he would have felt the need to conceal the fact. As for what evidence he would have needed to provide at the register office, registrars could ask for evidence, but it was not until 1999 that the law required documents to be provided as a matter of course.

In the absence of a divorce, his second marriage would simply have been void. Nevertheless, if he had not seen his first wife for seven years prior to his remarriage, and had no reason to believe that she was alive during that time, then he was not guilty of bigamy in a criminal sense.
Rebecca Probert

TOP TIP **The National Archives holds case files for divorces from the Supreme Court 1858–1937, with almost 100 per cent surviving for 1858–1927 and 80 per cent for 1928–1937. Records for 1858–1918 are on Ancestry (ancestry.co.uk).**

Is Louisa Woodrow Reeve my 3x great grandmother?

370 | Ninth of May 1845 Row 32 | Louisa Woodrow | Girl | | Louisa Reeve | | L. Reeve her X mark mother Row 32. | Sixth of June 1845. | H Worship Registrar.

Is the Louisa Woodrow Reeve who was born on 9 May 1845 in Yarmouth, and for whom no father was listed, Diane's forebear?

Q My 3x great grandmother, Louisa, was born c1846 in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. In the 1851 census, she appears as Louisa Fulcher, age five, daughter of William Fulcher and Hannah Albrow. They also had a daughter Hannah (born 1841). In the 1861 census, she is Louisa Reeve aged 16, boarder with the same family. She married in 1865, giving Reeve as her maiden name, there's no father's name and William Fulcher is a witness. Some children born to this marriage have mother's maiden name Fulcher, others Reeve. I can find no birth record for her. However, there is a Louisa Woodrow born 9 May 1845 to Louisa Reeve in Yarmouth with no father listed. Is this her?
Diane Humphrey

A When William and Hannah Fulcher's daughter Hannah was born in 1841, they both registered her birth and had her baptised at Great Yarmouth a few weeks later. However, there is no sign of a registration or baptism for Louisa Fulcher, which suggests Louisa was not their daughter. This, and the absence of a father's name on Louisa's marriage certificate and her alternating use of Reeve and Fulcher, suggests that Louisa was illegitimate and brought up, or adopted, by the Fulchers. Since adoptions were informal arrangements at that time, there will be no record of it.

With the implementation of the New Poor Law in 1834, illegitimate children became the sole responsibility of their mother. Sometimes a mother applied to the petty sessions for an affiliation, or maintenance, order. Where they survive, these can be found among petty-sessions records and were often reported in local newspapers (try the British Newspaper Archive, **britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**), but neither has a report of an application by Louisa Fulcher.

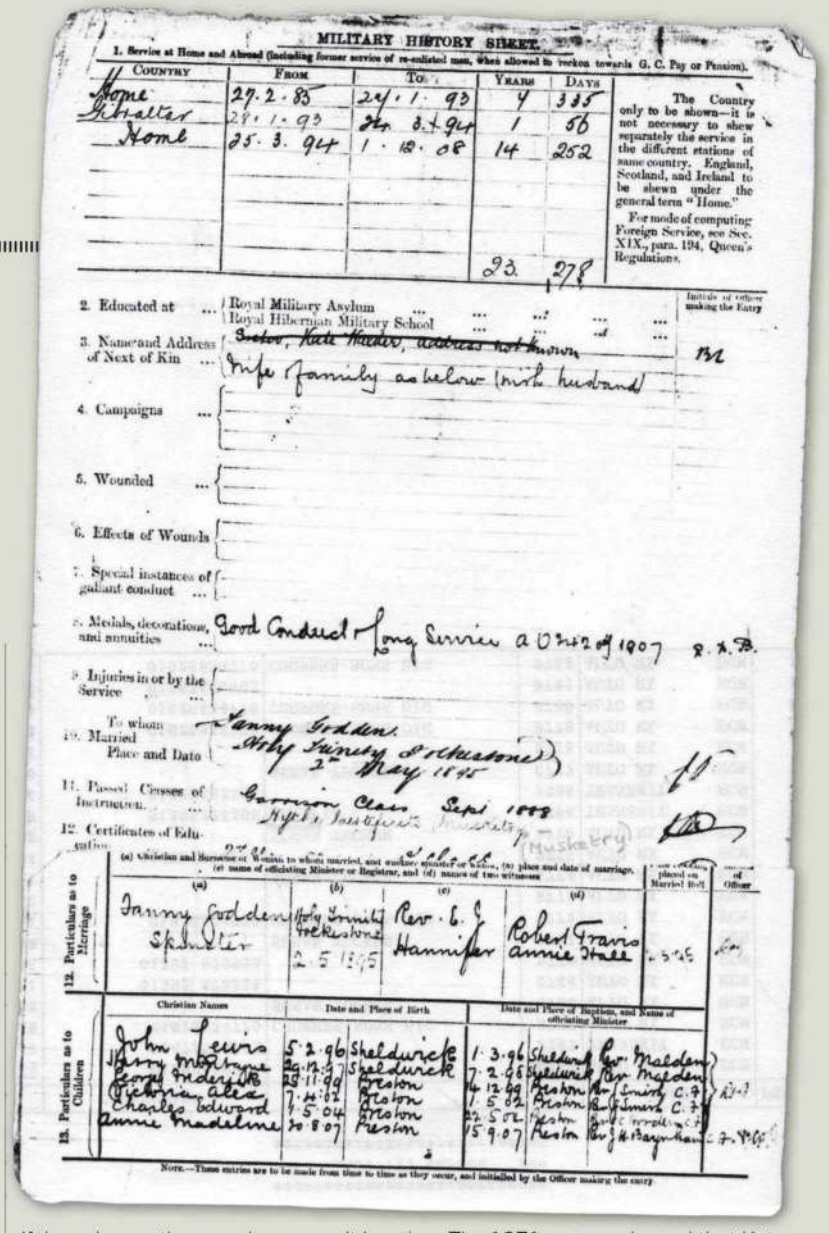
It's likely that your 3x great grandmother was the Louisa Woodrow Reeve whose birth you found. 'Woodrow' may hint at her father's surname.
Katherine Cobb

Big Question

Where did John Stanley come from?

Q I'm trying to trace the origins of my grandfather, John Stanley. He was in the Army and one clue is the name of his sister, Kate Walker, on his attestation form. His records state that he was born in Chelsea in 1865. None of his children, all now deceased, knew his date of birth, and I cannot find a birth or baptism for him. His death record in 1929 confirms his year of birth as 1865. My cousin recalls meeting a Great Aunt Polly, who he understood to be John's sister.
Beryl Stanley

BERYL STANLEY would love to know where and when her grandfather, John Stanley, was born



MILITARY HISTORY SHEET.

1. Service at Home and Abroad (including former service of re-enlisted men, when allowed to reckon towards G. C. Pay or Pension).

Country	From	To	Years	Days
Home	27.2.85	24.1.93	4	335
Gibraltar	28.1.93	24.3.94	1	56
Home	25.3.94	1.12.08	14	252
			23	278

The Country only to be shown—it is not necessary to shew separately the service in the different stations of same country. England, Scotland, and Ireland to be shewn under the general term "Home."

For mode of computing Foreign Service, see Sec. XIX., para. 194, Queen's Regulations.

2. Educated at ... Royal Military Asylum / Royal Hibernian Military School

3. Name and Address of Next of Kin ... ~~Sister, Kate Walker, address not known~~ Wife & family as below (with husband)

4. Campaigns ...

5. Wounded ...

6. Effects of Wounds

7. Special instances of gallant conduct ...

8. Medals, decorations, and annuities ... Good Conduct & Long Service a 0242 of 1907

9. Injuries in or by the Service ...

10. Married To whom Fanny Godden. Place and Date Holy Trinity Folkestone 2nd May 1895

11. Passed Classes of Instruction ... Garrison Class Sept 1888

12. Certificates of Education ... Hythe Certificate Musketry (Musketry)

12. Particulars as to Marriage: (a) Christian and Surname of Woman to whom married, and whether spinster or widow, (b) place and date of marriage, (c) name of officiating Minister or Registrar, and (d) names of two witnesses

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	Place and date of Married Roll	Number of Officer
Fanny Godden Spinster	Holy Trinity Folkestone 2.5.1895	Rev. E. J. Hannifer	Robert Travis Annie Hall	2.5.95	

13. Particulars as to Children

Christian Names	Date and Place of Birth		Date and Place of Baptism, and Name of officiating Minister		
John Lewis	5.2.96	Sheldwick	1.3.96	Sheldwick	Rev. Malden
Harry Montague	29.12.97	Sheldwick	7.2.98	Sheldwick	Rev. Malden
George Frederick	25.11.99	Preston	14.12.99	Preston	Rev. J. Smith C.F.
Victoria Alex	7.4.02	Preston	1.5.02	Preston	Rev. J. Smith C.F.
Charles Edward	1.5.04	Preston	22.5.02	Preston	Rev. [illegible] C.F.
Annie Madeline	20.8.07	Preston	15.9.07	Preston	Rev. J. H. Baynham C.F.

Note.—These entries are to be made from time to time as they occur, and initialled by the Officer making the entry.

John's attestation form with the words "Sister, Kate Walker, address not known" crossed through

A There is no marriage for a Catherine, Katherine, Kathleen, Katie or Kate Stanley to anyone with the surname Walker in the civil registration indexes between 1860 and 1885. This suggests that she was unmarried when John Stanley gave her name as next of kin in 1885.

There is just one Kate Walker's birth registered in the Chelsea Registration District between 1845 and 1875 – in the September index, 1868, volume 1a, page 249. There is none under the other forenames shown above.

John Stanley may not have been the name he was born with. Experience suggests that there is a pattern to the way people change their personal details, tending to change their surname more often than their forename. This may be because they fear they may fail to react to the new name in a work or social situation, which might give rise to suspicion. They also tend to keep to the day and month on which they were born even if they change the year. I suppose it is simpler to remember the date that way.

There were 28 Johns registered in the December 1865 birth index in Chelsea. This is without looking at the first quarter of 1866. However, 17 of the 28 can be ruled out because they either died young or can be identified in census returns after 1881. The 11 remaining include a John Frederick Walker born in Chelsea district in the December quarter 1865 (1a, 233).

Many of the birth indexes at the General Register Office (GRO) now include mother's maiden name. They are free to view at the GRO's website (**www.gro.gov.uk**), and are also being added by Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**). This enabled me to establish that both Kate and John Frederick's mother was surnamed Watts. However, they appear not to have been brother and sister, but first cousins.

The 1871 census showed that Kate was the daughter of Thomas Alfred Walker and his wife Mary Jane (née Watts), and John Frederick was the son of George Walker and his wife Lucina/Lucy (née Watts). Could this have been two brothers marrying two sisters?

John Frederick was baptised along with two sisters, Mary Ann and Jemima Harriett, on 6 February 1870 at St Paul's, Wilton Place, Middlesex. Their address was 2 Grosvenor Cottages, and their father was a furniture porter.

The family was living at 2 Grosvenor Cottages, Belgravia, in the 1871 census. The rest of the family can be found at this address in 1881 through to 1901, but neither John Frederick nor his sister Mary Ann appear again. Polly was a nickname for both Mary and Mary Ann, so might she be Great Aunt Polly? I cannot find death entries for them in the area in 1871–1881.

Is the fact that the sole Kate Walker had a mother with a surname identical to this John Frederick Walker simply a coincidence, or might there be something to be gained from researching this family further?
Steve Thomas

1870 Feb: 6 No. 1420	John Frederick	George & Lucy	Walker	2 Grosvenor Cottages	Furniture Porter	J. W. S. Collis

Could this be the baptism record for John Stanley?

Can you help me identify this soldier?

Q We think that this soldier may be William Ferriday Jones (born 1882, Liverpool). However, we're not sure he fits with the date this photograph was taken. Can you help?
Sian MacDonald

A This is a part-time Volunteer soldier photographed in Liverpool c1901. He's been in the Volunteers for at least a year.

Since your photograph was taken in Liverpool it seems most likely, assuming it is William, that he enlisted in the 1st Volunteer Battalion, King's (Liverpool) Regiment (KLR), whose HQ was close to his address in the 1901 census. Given the date of c1901 it's probable that he enlisted while much of the regular Army was involved in the Second Boer War (1899–1902). Following the Army reform of 1908 the 1st Volunteer Battalion became the 5th Territorial Force Battalion, KLR. Like the Volunteers, it was part-time and designed for Home Defence duties, although men could volunteer to serve abroad. Almost all Volunteer records were destroyed in 1940 during the Blitz.

I looked for any record for William in the First World War. Guessing that he'd been in the KLR I searched the Medal Index Cards, which are on The National Archives' website (**nationalarchives.gov.uk**) as well as Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**), and the service records, which are on Ancestry too plus Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**).

I found a William Jones (200275, with an earlier number, 1806), 5th Battalion, KLR, discharged sick in 1917 with a Silver War Badge (SWB); and a William Jones (380130), 25th KLR (which contained many former Volunteers), discharged with a SWB but living in Dukinfield.
Phil Tomaselli

1 CAP The pillbox cap, slightly tilted, was worn by some units, but had gone out of fashion by 1903. So this photograph was probably taken before then.

2 JACKET The eight-button scarlet jacket is a relic from the 1880s, still worn by some Volunteer units. The snake buckle belt is pre-1903 (reused sometimes in the First World War), dating it to the early 1900s.

3 CUFF KNOT The fact that he's a Volunteer is confirmed by the Austrian knot on his cuffs (abandoned by the Regular Army in the 1880s) and the white lozenge, awarded to Volunteers "returned as efficient in rifle drill" after a year or more's service.

4 STUDIO Maybury's photographic studio was short-lived. Alfred Maybury was 23 on the 1901 census (actually slightly older), giving his occupation as photographer. He advertised in 1902, and was a photographer when he joined the Freemasons (1903). Maybury later went into a partnership, but under a different business name. It's a narrow timeframe.

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LOCAL INDUSTRY

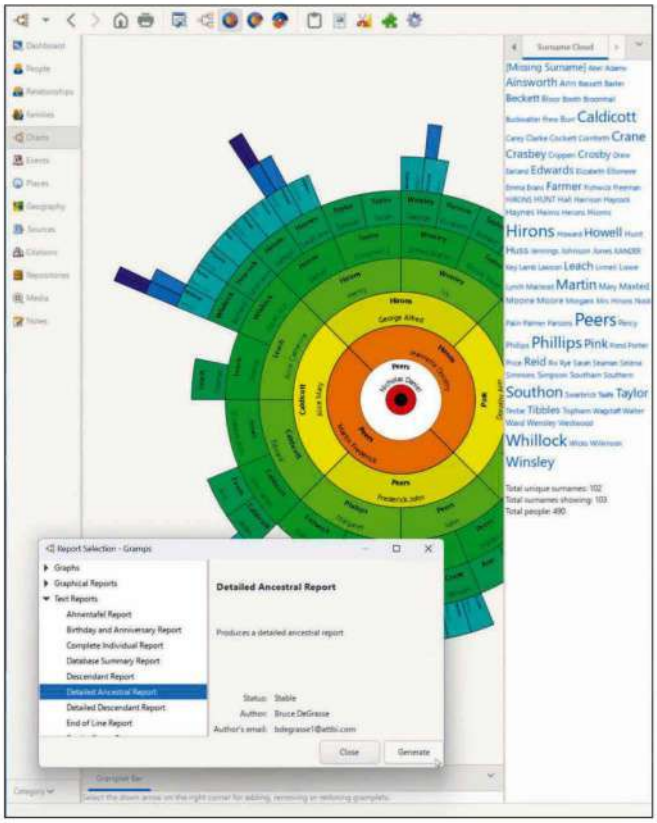
Celebrating our ancestors' work in key trades

GETTY IMAGES

In A Right Old Pickle

Factory workers on the former platform at the disused Lewes Road railway station in Brighton pack pickles, March 1935

Following the First World War, passenger railways saw increasing competition from buses and trams, and between 1923 and 1939 around 1,300 miles of track were closed. Some former station buildings were put to good use, such as these at Brighton's Lewes Road station, which were used as a pickle factory following its closure in 1933. Pickling is thought to have begun thousands of years ago as a way of preserving food when it is plentiful, using vinegar or brine. The interwar period saw the beginning of a rise in demand for canned, packaged and preserved foods, with firms such as Cross and Blackwell opening new factories around the world (they started making Branston Pickle in 1922 in Bermondsey, London). In the UK at the time this photograph was taken, the most popular items for pickling were eggs and onions. Factory workers would sit and peel thousands of onions before packing them into glass jars or bottles for pickling. For more on the history of food preservation in the UK, visit **https://britishfoodhistory.com/**.



Build a family tree from scratch with Gramps

Nick Peers reveals how to get started with this free hidden gem for Linux, PC and Mac users

There are many free programs out there for recording your family history, but none holds a candle to Gramps. It debuted as a Linux-only program in 2001 but is now available for Windows and macOS too, and has evolved into one of the most powerful programs around.

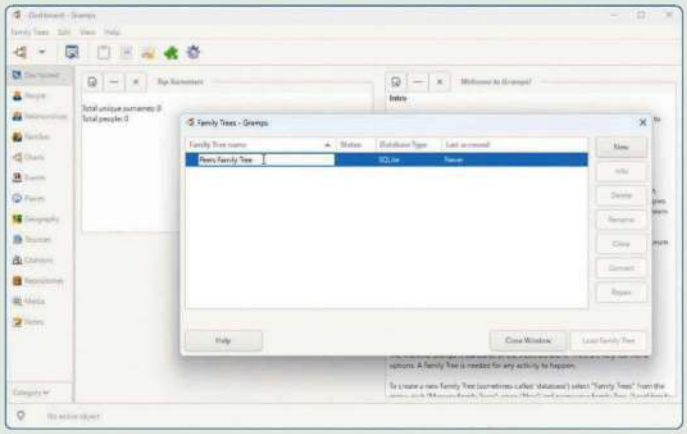
Gramps may appear a little too feature-packed when you first open it, but it's actually quite straightforward to use. What we particularly like about it is that it encourages you to be precise, providing lots of ways to record information, but in a way that promotes consistency.

To begin, head to the homepage (**gramps-project.org**) and click 'Download' in the menu bar to find installers for your chosen platform. Simply download the one you want (such as Windows 64-bit for most PC users) and then double-click the set-up file and follow the prompts. Mac users may be prompted to install additional software; Windows users will likely see the SmartScreen filter – click 'More info' followed by 'Run anyway'.

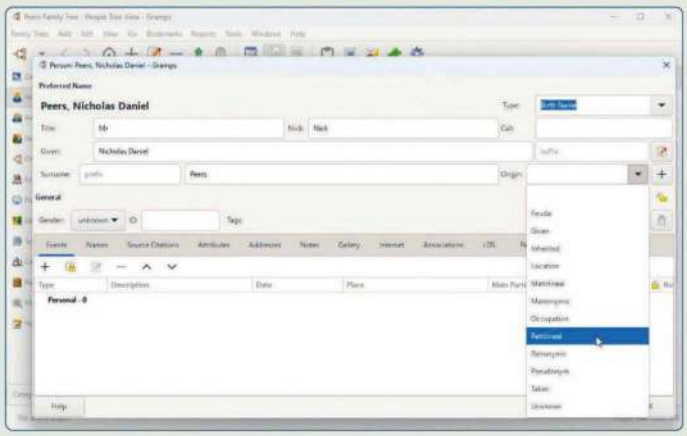
Once installed, Gramps may temporarily open several windows. Wait until just the Dashboard and Family Trees windows remain open before following our step-by-step guide to get to grips with the program.

TOP TIP!

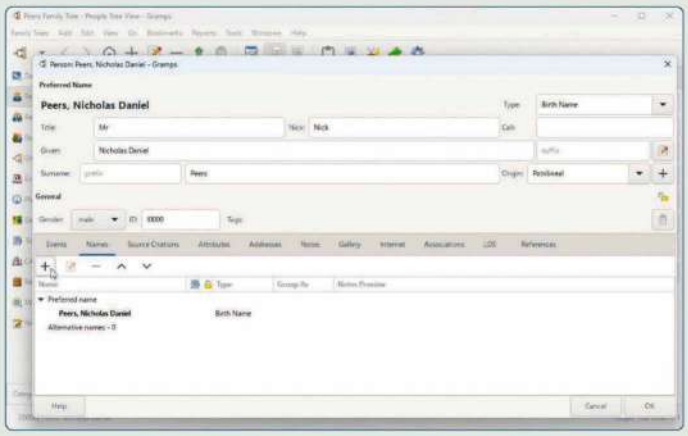
Gramps supports the GEDCOM format. If you have a tree you wish to transfer across, just choose 'Family Trees > Import' to select and import your file.



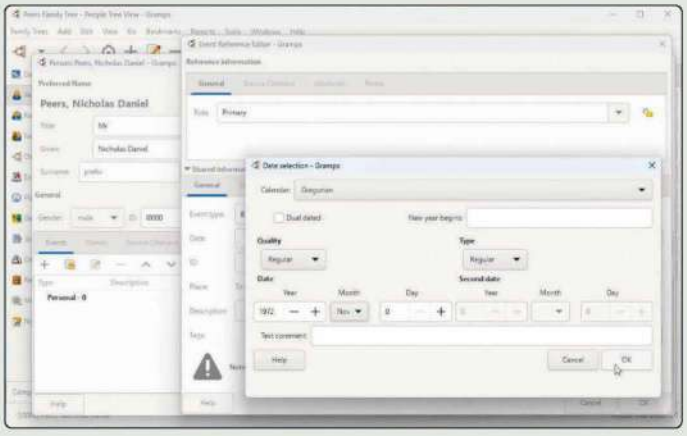
1 Set Up Your File Start by clicking the 'New' button inside the Family Trees window. A new entry will appear – click inside the 'Family Tree name' field to change its name to something more descriptive. Once you've finished, click 'Load Family Tree' to load the blank tree you just created.



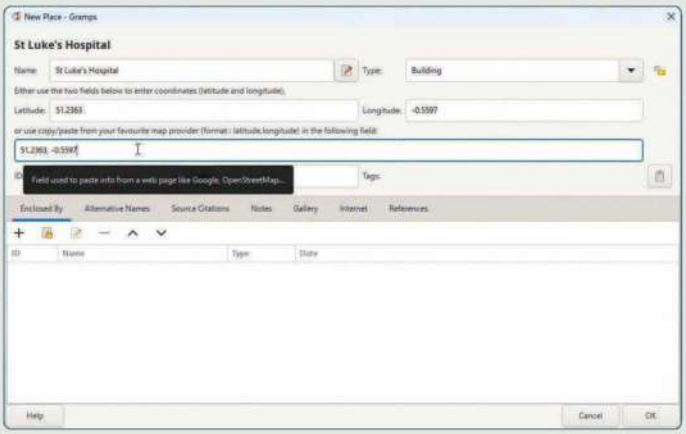
2 Add Your First Person After resizing the Dashboard window to fit more information on your screen, select 'People' from the left-hand pane to switch to a new view. Click the + button in the toolbar and add the details of your first person (typically yourself). Once you've filled in the key information, click 'OK'.



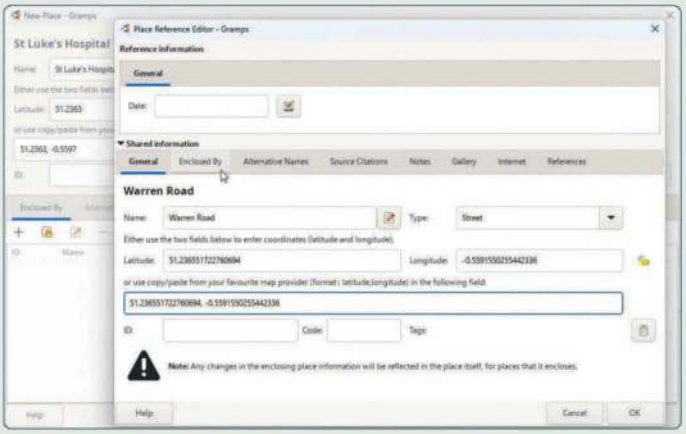
3 Add Names Expand your surname to reveal your entry in the People window, then double-click it to reopen the Person window from the previous step. Use the 'Names' tab to add additional names (such as a married name), then switch back to the 'Events' tab and click + to add a particular event.



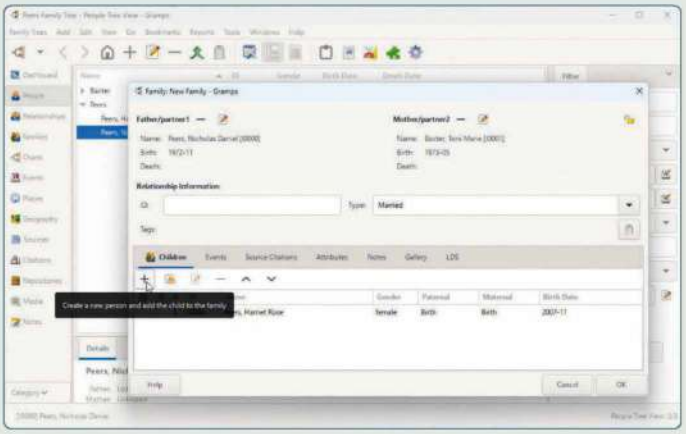
4 Input Event Details Enter details about the event in the 'General' tab of the Event Reference Editor window that pops up. Choose an event type from the dropdown, then input a date (using the format YYYY, Mon YYYY or YYYY–MM–DD) or use the date-selection tool to choose a range. Add a brief description of the event.



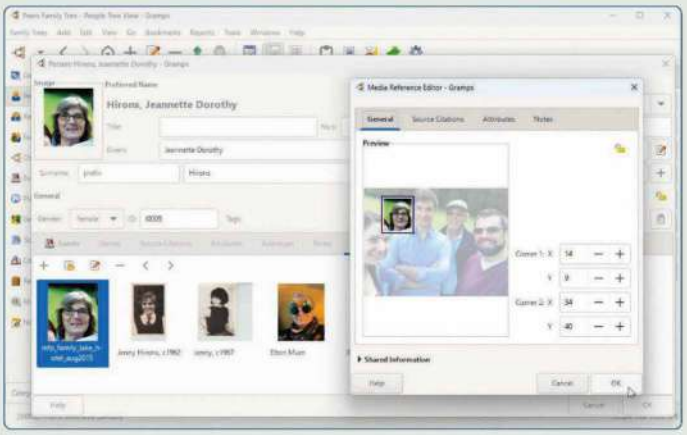
5 Assign A Place Click + next to 'Place' to assign a location to the event. You'll need to set up a separate place entry. Start by entering the lowest level of the address you have – such as a hospital name for a birth, or cemetery for a burial. Set the type of location and add precise geographical coordinates if you have them.



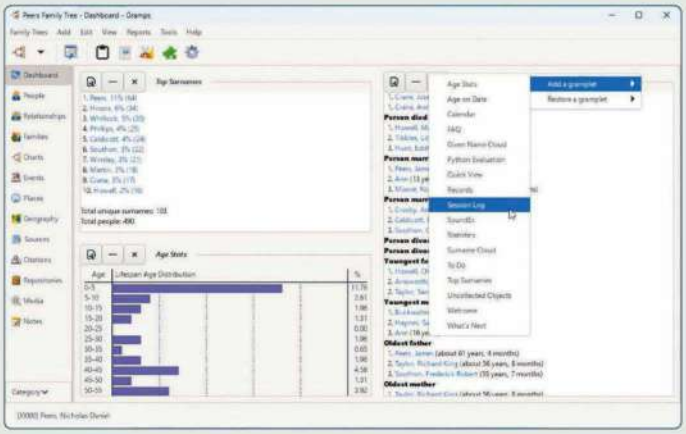
6 Set Up A Hierarchy Places are 'enclosed' in hierarchies like 'Place > Street > Town'. Click + under 'Enclosed By' to create the next level up. Fill in the same details as before, then switch to that dialog's 'Enclosed By' tab and repeat. Once you've added the top hierarchy, click 'OK' to close each window in turn.



7 Build Out Your Tree Now the basic building blocks of facts and places are established, focus on adding new people. Select 'Add > Family' to set up family groups: parents and children. Click + to create new entries from scratch following the previous steps, or click the Select button to its right to choose an existing person.

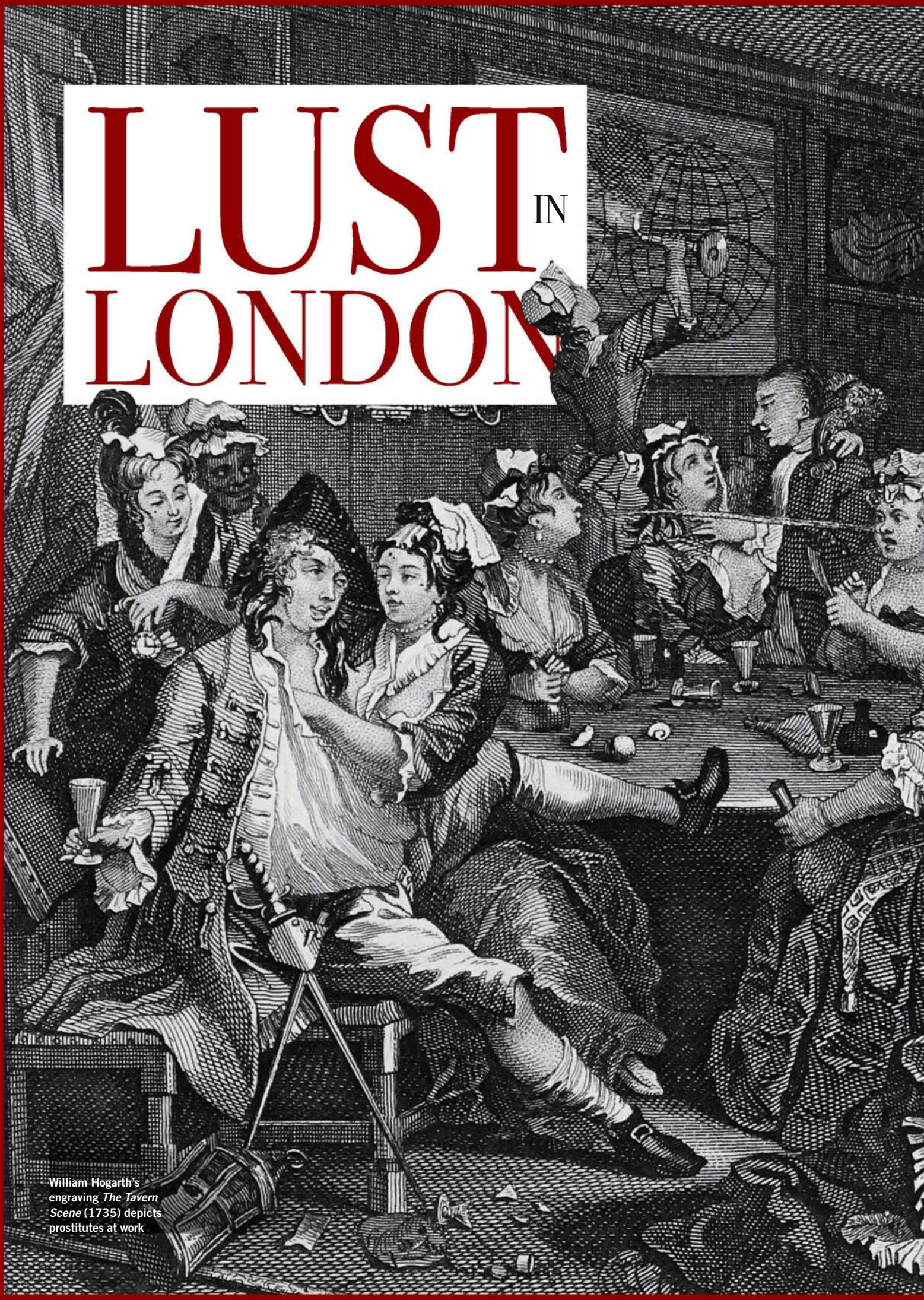


8 Put Meat On The Bones Explore the other tabs in the Person window where you can add sources (and citations) and notes, plus attach photos and document scans to people. Similar tabs can be found in other parts of the program too, from families and places to individual events and sources.



9 Analyse Your Tree Gramps is packed with tools for examining your tree – simply explore the categories in the sidebar on the left where you'll find charts, maps and more. The Dashboard also provides a handy summary of various statistics; just right-click the empty space and choose 'Add a gramplet' to choose what's displayed.

LUST IN LONDON



William Hogarth's engraving *The Tavern Scene* (1735) depicts prostitutes at work

Julie Peakman reveals the lives of London's streetwalkers and other prostitutes in the 18th century

Streetwalkers were regarded as the lowest strata of women involved in prostitution in the 18th century. In his pamphlet *Some Considerations Upon Street-walkers* (1726) author Daniel Defoe complained about whores accosting him as he walked the streets of London: "I have every now and then been put to the Halt, sometimes by the full Encounter of an audacious Harlot, whose impudent Leer shewd she only stoppe'd my Passage in order to draw my Observation on her; at other times, by Twitches on the Sleeve, lewd and ogling Salutations." Often with no brothel where they would take their clients, they had sex in alleyways, dark corners of streets or parks. Others might solicit in the streets or taverns but had dismal lodgings where they could take men back. Even those women working from brothels might fall into plying their trade as streetwalkers once their looks faded and they had been on the town for too long.

Police Harassment

Streetwalking took place all over the city, and no woman was safe from harassment by the local watch. However, being a streetwalker was not illegal so arresting constables made a variety of other charges against them. For example, Hannah Sheppard was taken in as she was "not able to give Account of her selfe" and sentenced to hard labour. It seems that any woman who was out late at night would be deemed idle and disorderly, and was at risk of being arrested. Elizabeth White was picked up by watchman John Wheeler for being a "common idle Night Walker taken strolling last night at an unreasonable hour and talking obscenely in the streets". Anne

Hussey was accused of being a common nightwalker with "no visible means of a livelihood". Neither could a woman easily sit and have a drink in a tavern with a man without attracting the uncomfortable eye of the law; Anne Hughes was arrested for being a "common night-walker taken late in the night with a man in a publick house".

In London, as with other major cities, contemporary observers complained about the gangs of whores who hung out on street corners. A writer for the journal *The Tatler* in 1709 declared that Covent Garden in the West End "from Cellar to Garrett is inhabited by Nymphs of different orders so that persons of every rank can be accommodated". Yet establishing the numbers of prostitutes was nigh well impossible because their work was clandestine. Contemporary estimations varied wildly between 20,000 and 40,000 over the century.

As well as Covent Garden, trade was briskest in nearby Pall Mall, St James's, Piccadilly, and in Shadwell and Wapping in East London. Other hotspots included Charing Cross, the Strand, Fleet Street, Holborn, Chick Lane, Cheap Street, Leadenhall Street, East Smithfield, Petticoat Lane, Whitechapel and Southwark.

Prostitutes also picked up clients in Hyde Park and St James's Park, and coupled on the grass in the open air. Diarist James Boswell – the biographer of writer Samuel Johnson – wrote, "As I was coming home this night I felt carnal inclinations raging thro' my frame. I determined to gratify them. I went to St. James's Park and like Sir John Brute, picked up a Whore."

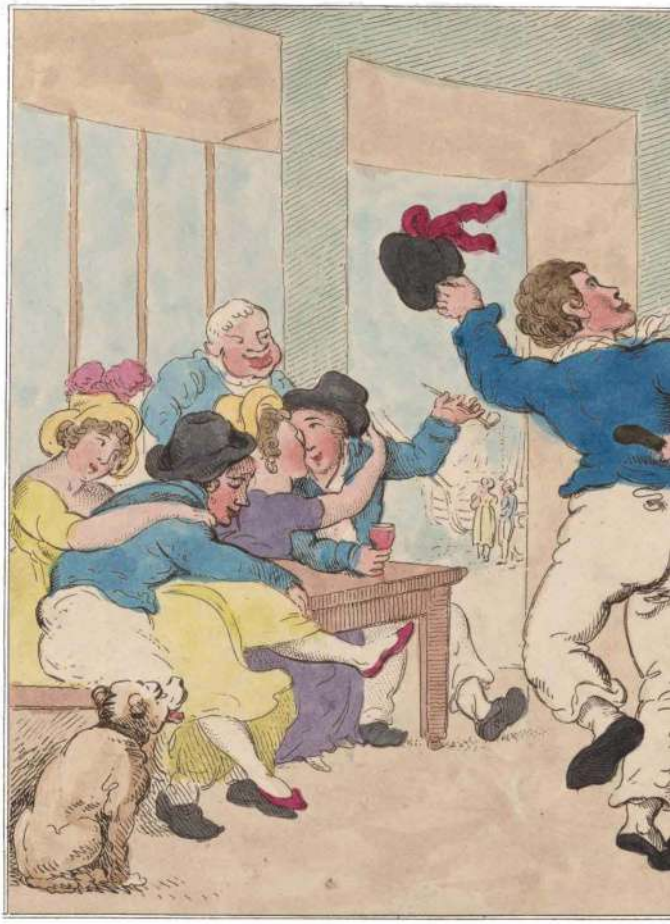
A streetwalker in the West End, 1786

Gardens Of Delight

Pleasure gardens were also famed for prostitution. After a trip to Vauxhall Gardens, Virginian planter William Byrd wrote in his diary how he and a friend encountered two women there and "carried them into the arbour... and about 10 o'clock we carried them to the bagnio (bath house), where we bathed and lay with them all night". Sadly, we have few verbal accounts from the women who worked on the streets except maybe statements when brought to trial – and even those were filtered through male note-takers.

Some taverns, too, had back rooms that men could hire to take a woman for sex. Once the regular taverns had closed, a shack near the Piazza of Covent Garden known as Moll and Tom King's Coffee Shop remained open for much of the night, and was renowned as a picking-up place popular in the 1720s and 1730s. According to the biographical pamphlet *The Life and Character of Moll King* (1747), "Every Swain, even from the Star and Garter to the Coffee-House Boy, might be sure of finding a Nymph in waiting at *Moll's Fair Reception House*."

Making a life on the streets of London in the 18th century was hard for any woman, but some managed to survive by selling sex with the added sideline of pickpocketing. One such woman was Jane Webb, who arrived in London from Ireland. Her landlady introduced her to a gang of thieves, who used various tricks: dipping into gentlemen's jackets, loosening jewellery undetected and cutting off women's pockets. With the bloom of youth fading, Webb



GETTY IMAGES / PUBLIC DOMAIN

Nancy Dawson 1728–1767

The "notoriously immoral" and mysterious life of one London performer

Nancy Dawson was born under the name Ann Newton probably in London, although some sources say Devon. As with so many notorious public women, her biography is muddled. Most agree that she began working for the Griffin Puppeteers when she was around 16, with a sideline in acrobatics and dancing. Dawson edged her way up in the theatre, but was rumoured to lead a "notoriously immoral life". She made her stage debut at Sadler's Wells Theatre in Islington, dancing in the chorus of Thomas Betterton's opera *The Prophetess* in 1758, but the work was seasonal and supposedly she fell back into prostitution each time the season was over.

In 1759, Dawson moved on to Covent Garden Theatre where she danced the hornpipe between acts of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), and after three years left to continue the same at Drury Lane Theatre. Her name appears in the Drury Lane bills for the last time on 27 December 1763, but no one is sure why she retired so suddenly. According to one source, she ended up in Wetherby's drinking den, run by Mother Wetherby, where the infamous prostitute Lucy Cooper also plied her trade.

Nancy Dawson died in 1767 at Haverstock Hill, and was buried in St George's Graveyard in Bloomsbury.

GETTY IMAGES

Prostitutes in a sailors' tavern in Wapping, East London, 1807

became increasingly reliant on pickpocketing. She became so well known that she was nicknamed 'Jenny Diver' ('diver' was slang for a pickpocket).

In one ingenious scam, Webb acquired two false arms to cover her supposedly pregnant belly and sat in a meeting house between two elderly ladies on either side, quietly pilfering their watches. She would also pretend to fall in St James's Park, again disguised as a pregnant woman, while the gang filched what they could from people trying to help her.

'Overstock'd With Harlots'

Domestic service was seen as responsible for forcing many young girls onto the streets, because they lost their homes if they lost their jobs. Indeed, any live-in position could easily be lost if it became known that the woman had had 'sexual liaisons'. According to one anonymous contemporary commentator, "The Town being overstock'd with Harlots, is entirely owing to those Numbers of *Women-Servants*, incessantly pouring into it from all Corners of the Universe, and those Debaucheries practic'd upon 'em in almost all the Families that entertain them." Female servants were often turned out after being molested or seduced by the master of the house or his son.

What's more, prostitution was a transient profession. Women weaved in and out of the trade depending on the other work available. Seasonal employment meant that women fell on hard times when harvest was over, when a theatre closed after a season or when work simply dried up. Then they might take up prostitution on a spasmodic basis. At the best of times, work opportunities for single women were few and far between, mainly jobs in the dress trade or domestic service. Milliners and makers of mantuas (a type of gown) were particularly known for their sideline in prostitution, and for fixing men up with women.

As well as those who turned to prostitution after being seduced or raped while working in another family's house, many girls and young women who sold sex had been orphaned, or abandoned by their still-living parents. They had often entered the profession when 12–15 years old, but most ranged in age from 15 to their early 20s. Other women chose prostitution because they had been rejected by their families after a love affair of which their parents did not approve, or because they had been seduced by a man on promise of marriage, and had been deserted.

Rather than seeing prostitutes as victims of circumstance, the majority of contemporary commentators preferred to regard them as part of the general mass of the 'idle undeserving poor'. Indeed, of the hundreds of streetwalkers who were hauled in front of London magistrates between 1730 and 1830, most of them were born into pauperism.

In reality, poorer prostitutes were often accepted in their own communities. They were not set apart from their friends and family, but lived within poor neighbourhoods, such as in Spitalfields in East London or the slums of Covent Garden, and shared common lodgings. Their temporary move into prostitution reflected the fluid social identity of the labouring poor.

JULIE PEAKMAN is a historian who writes about 18th-century culture and sexuality. Find out more at **juliepeakman.co.uk**

Resources

Take your research further

ARCHIVE

London Metropolitan Archives

a **40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB**
t 020 7332 3820
w **tinyurl.com/lon-met-arc**
Most of London's arrested streetwalkers were sent to Bridewell Prison. Surviving records are kept in the 'Royal Hospitals of Bridewell and Bethlem' collection at LMA.

BOOKS

Disorderly Women in Eighteenth-Century London

Tony Henderson
Routledge, 1999
Learn about the lives of London's prostitutes (1730–1830).

Harris's List of Covent-Garden Ladies

H Ranger, 1757–1795
Some editions of this anonymous annual directory of prostitutes are in the Internet Archive at **tinyurl.com/arch-harris-list**.

Libertine London

Julie Peakman
Reaktion, 2024
Julie's investigation of the sex lives of female Londoners, including streetwalkers and courtesans, is available now.

WEBSITES

Old Bailey Online

w **oldbaileyonline.org**
For more serious crimes including keeping a 'disorderly house' or a brothel, sex crimes (and their victims) and stealing, you can search for a person's name, type of crime, date, etc in this database of 197,752 trials held at London's central criminal court (1674–1913).

The National Archives

w **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-trans**
TNA has created an online guide to researching transported criminals, although more men were transported than women.

'Daisy Hid The Truth Of Her Tangled Love Life'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Pat Smith was baffled by her grandmother's relationship history, but DNA testing and detective work cracked the case. By **Gail Dixon**

Respectability was vital to our ancestors, who often assumed a partner's surname to 'legitimise' children born out of wedlock. Naturally this can present challenges when building a family tree, but, as Pat Smith explains, it's possible to tease out the truth.

PAT SMITH lives in Reading, Berkshire, and is a production supply planner. She has been researching her tree for 16 years

My Brick Wall

I knew my maternal grandmother Daisy Dawe very well. Her home was in the village of Calcot near Reading, Berkshire, close to where I live today. I remember her as a small, quiet lady who loved to watch wrestling on television.

Daisy was born in Bath, Somerset, in 1890 to gardener George Dawe and his wife Mary Toghill, who worked as a laundress. She went into domestic service, and on the 1911 census she was working as a cook in Leatherhead, Surrey.

We were told that our grandfather's name was George Bray, which was odd because my mother, who was born in 1929, was called Joan Taylor.

George passed away in 1932, and the family didn't really talk about him at all.

By 1929, Daisy had eight children, the eldest being Ruth Taylor who was born in 1912, then Vera, Jack, Florence, Ronald, Doris, Stanley and Joan. They were all given the surname Taylor, even though records suggested that George Bray was the father of the five youngest children.

I started researching our family history in 2007, and found it fascinating. Sadly, Mum was the only one of Daisy's children who was still alive at that point, and she never knew George.

Census returns revealed that George Bray was born in Reading, Berkshire, in 1878. He started work as a greengrocer before becoming a railway-signal fitter.

Unfortunately he was hard to trace, because his job involved moving around a lot and staying in boarding houses.

It was only through using electoral rolls that I found him in the 1921 census staying in lodgings in Reading.

I searched for a marriage between George Bray and Daisy Dawe or Taylor, but nothing appeared. More mysteries emerged when I ordered birth certificates for Daisy's children.

Ruth's father was a Harry Taylor, while her sister Vera's was an Alfred Taylor. Their brother

Marriage Record, 1906

This record, which Pat ordered from the General Register Office, supported the transcript she found on Findmypast

1906. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Wokingham in the County of Berks.

Columns: No.	1 When Married.	2 Name and Surname.	3 Age.	4 Condition.	5 Rank or Profession.	6 Residence at the time of Marriage.	7 Father's Name and Surname.	8 Rank or Profession of Father.
89.	October 3. 1	George Bray.	27	Bachelor	Greengrocer	Reading.	George Bray.	Wheelwright.
	1906 2	Bessie Lewendon	27	Spinster	waitress.	Rose Hotel Wokingham.	Frank Lewendon	Carman.

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by ~~or~~ after Banns by me, A. P. Carr.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, George Bray, Bessie Lewendon. In the Presence of us, 3 James Bray, Jessie Lewendon.

1 George Bray
Pat's grandfather George married at Wokingham Parish Church in Berkshire on 3 October 1906.

2 Bessie Lewendon
George was still married to Bessie when he met Pat's grandmother Daisy, and their marriage was never dissolved.

3 James Bray
One of the witnesses was George's brother James, which helped to prove the connection and solve the mystery.

Jack had no father mentioned, and so it continued for the following five children.

A DNA test proved without doubt that George was my grandfather, because I matched with Bray family members on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk/dna**). Why did Mum and five of her siblings have the 'wrong' surname?

My Eureka Moment

Further proof came when my cousin Sheila told me that she'd found notes that her dad Geoff had made following a conversation with Uncle Stanley.

Daisy had told Stanley that her first husband was called William Taylor, and that the couple had met while she was working as a cook in Leatherhead.

She had got pregnant by William, and they married at a registry office in London on 20 June 1911. I searched the indexes but couldn't find any record of their marriage. Tragically Daisy claimed that William was killed in a road accident before Ruth was even born.

In 1939, Stanley applied for sea training, and Geoff possessed a copy of his naval application report. Daisy had explained the family's situation to the recruiting officer, and stated that after William's death she received an orphan's pension.

George Bray and Daisy Dawe with three of her children – *(left to right)* Jack, Ruth and Vera

She met George Bray in 1914 and they cohabited using the name Mr and Mrs Taylor, perhaps for respectability. That is why the Bray children were given the surname Taylor, the same as their older half-sister Ruth. I don't know why Ruth's father's name was given as Harry Taylor – that remains a mystery.

Daisy was facing financial hardship in 1939, because her son Jack was about to join the Army and she would lose his contribution to the household income. However, the notes also revealed that Daisy received an offer of marriage from a roadsweeper called Robert Brown, who lived in Calcot. In 1940, she married him and on the certificate she declared herself as "Daisy Dawe, spinster".

My Breakthrough

Why hadn't George and Daisy married and given their children the surname Bray? I finally found the answer on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**), which revealed that in 1906 George Bray married Bessie Lewendon in Wokingham, Berkshire.

This family photo includes Daisy Brown, six of her children (Joan is third from the left at the back) and her first two grandchildren

All the details of his parents, occupation and witnesses tied in.

George and Bessie had a daughter called Josephine in 1906, so my mother and her siblings had a half-sister who they never knew. I assume that this marriage broke down and divorce wasn't an option, which is why George and Daisy couldn't marry.

George was commemorated with other members of his family in Reading's cemetery. My grandmother was left with eight children to raise, although Ruth was aged 20 in 1932.

Daisy died in Calcot in 1977 at the age of 87, with her loving family close by. Who would have known that she had led such a complicated life?

HAVE YOU BROKEN THROUGH A BRICK WALL?

Share your family story with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Reader Tips

Pat shares her hard-won advice for breaking down brick walls

- Always consult your relations – they might not realise how important their information could be to your research.
- Electoral registers can help you find your ancestors' addresses.
- Witnesses to marriages can supply key clues.

Stories From Hospital Cemeteries

Rosemary Collins interviews a member of a group commemorating hospital cemeteries in Lancashire

Four patients of Calderstones Hospital are buried in this plot, including Thomas 'Tommy' Smith

People who had what we now understand as learning difficulties routinely spent their lives in hospitals in the 20th century. Two such institutions were located near Whalley, Lancashire. Calderstones Hospital opened in 1921 after operating as Queen Mary's Military Hospital for injured servicemen during the First World War. Brockhall Hospital opened in 1904 as an institution for inebriate women before becoming a home for people with learning difficulties. Most of the patients at both hospitals moved to living in the community during the 1980s. Brockhall closed in 1992, while Calderstones shut at the end of March.

Both institutions had cemeteries where patients who died in the hospital were buried. There are 1,175 people buried in Calderstones Cemetery, and 587 buried in Brockhall Cemetery. After the hospitals closed, the cemeteries passed into private ownership.

There are these 1,175 people in the midst of this village, hidden in a field

The Friends of Calderstones Hospital Cemetery and the Friends of Brockhall Cemetery were founded as two separate groups to preserve the memory of the cemeteries. In 2020 they merged into one organisation, the Friends of Calderstones and Brockhall Hospital Cemeteries (FCBHC; **calderstones-cemetery.co.uk**).

FCBHC's Dennis Buckley reports that Calderstones Cemetery is in a bad way: "There are these 1,175 people in the midst of this village, and they are hidden in a field that is overgrown and neglected. Their gravestones were taken. You would not know that they were there." In contrast, he says, the adjoining Queen Mary's Hospital Cemetery section is pristine, while the graves in Brockhall Cemetery have headstones and a memorial.

FCBHC's website includes maps, plans and photographs of the two cemeteries, and lists of all of the people who were buried there. There are also biographies of some of them, drawing on hospital records and in some cases the memories of their relatives, who are also members of FCBHC.

For example, Thomas 'Tommy' Smith was born in Barrow-in-Furness in 1911. He was admitted to Calderstones when he was just 10 years old, after he set wall hangings on fire and threw his mother's purse into the fireplace. He is described in his records as destructive, and having a mental age of less than three. In 1938 Tommy was diagnosed with phenylketonuria. First identified in 1934, phenylketonuria is a rare inherited disorder that causes brain damage. Tommy was one of the first patients in England to be diagnosed with this condition. Sadly he died in 1942.

Calderstones Cemetery is also the final resting place of the 'Booth Hall Babies'. At the start of the Second World War, the patients and staff of Booth Hall Children's Hospital, Manchester, were evacuated to Calderstones – 18 of the evacuated children died there, of whom 13 are buried in the cemetery.

The Diocese of Blackburn is now proposing to deconsecrate part of Calderstones Cemetery to allow for a crematorium to be built. FCBHC has organised opposition to the proposal, and is currently waiting for the diocese's ruling.

"The fundamental reason is that we believe that it would be wrong to do so," Dennis says. "It's about the value of one group of people against another."

A spokesperson for the diocese said, "The bishop will make his final decision in due course after considering all representations made specifically in relation to the matter of deconsecration."

TELL YOUR STORY

Share your local history project with us and you could appear in the magazine!

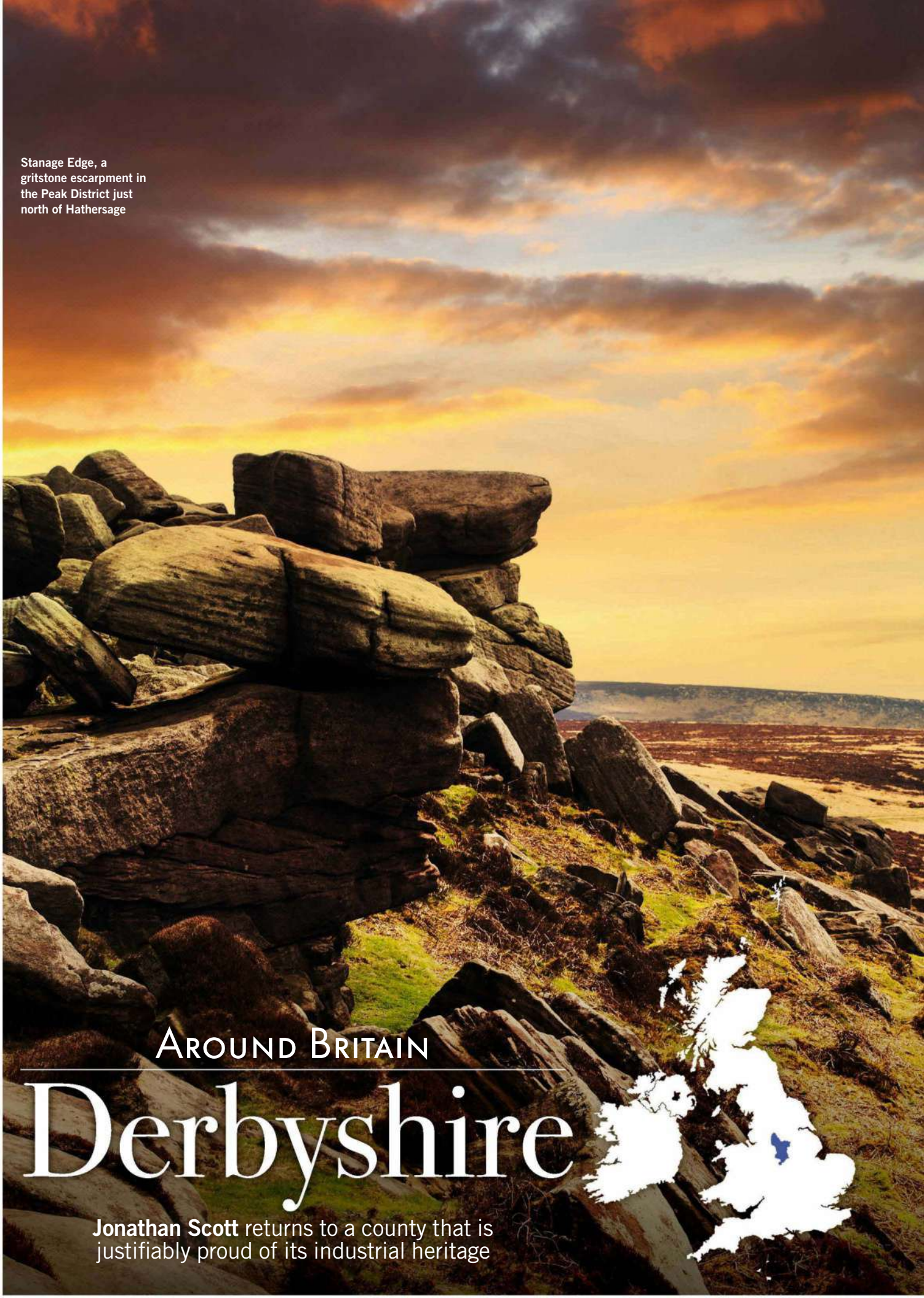
Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *rosemary.collins@ourmedia.co.uk*

Find Out More

Friends Of Calderstones And Brockhall Hospital Cemeteries
w **calderstones-cemetery.co.uk**

Visit the group's website to learn about the history of the cemeteries and the patients buried there.

HEATHER NUNN



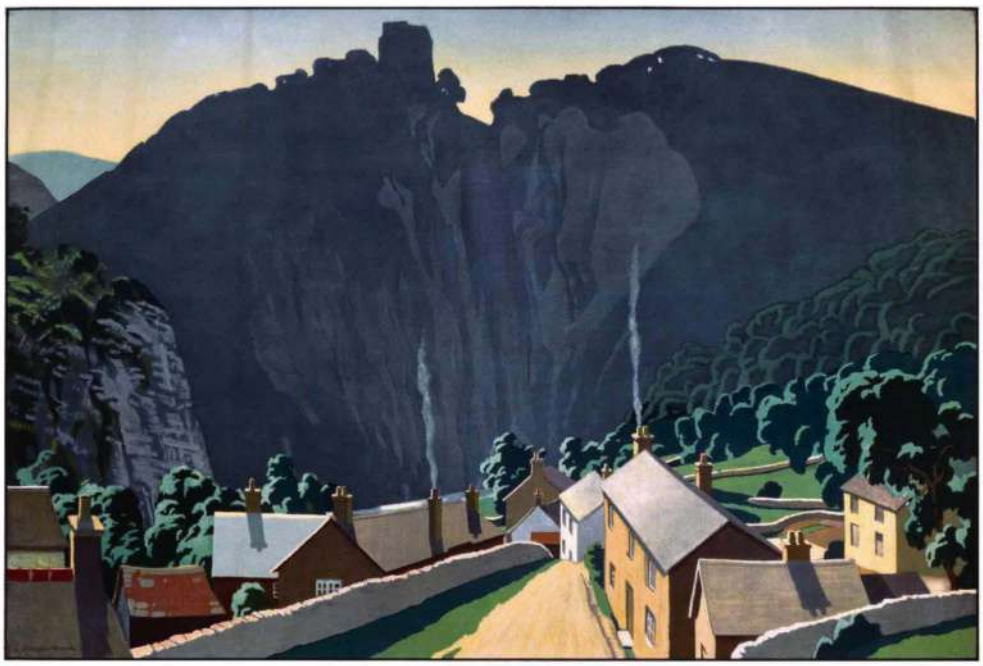
Stanage Edge, a gritstone escarpment in the Peak District just north of Hathersage

Around Britain

Derbyshire

Jonathan Scott returns to a county that is justifiably proud of its industrial heritage

GETTY IMAGES



Railway poster image from 1924 looking up at Peveril Castle in Derbyshire

Although the exact date is unknown, Derby School was founded some time in the mid-12th century. The local tradition of decorating ('dressing') wells with designs often made from petals dates back to at least the 15th century. The famous Ashbourne custom of shrovetide football, where two vast teams of players compete over a leather ball filled with cork chippings, was certainly an annual event by the 17th century. But perhaps the single most influential moment came during the 18th century, when in 1771 Richard Arkwright opened Cromford Mill, the world's first successful water-powered cotton-spinning mill, sparking both the Industrial Revolution and the modern factory system.

Family historians researching the area remotely can achieve a great deal. A partnership between Derbyshire Record Office in Matlock (DRO; **derbyshire.gov.uk/recordoffice**), run by Derbyshire County Council, and Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) means that more than six million entries from registers of baptisms, marriages, banns and burials are available on the website, while Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) has a wealth of school records and logbooks, alongside transcriptions produced by Derbyshire Family History Society (**dfhs.org.uk**).

Behind the scenes at DRO, staff and volunteers have also been working on numerous projects to improve digital finding aids and online access to the material held here. Archivist Becky Sheldon says that for decades they've had a fantastic collection of records relating to the Derbyshire Constabulary, for example, that have remained relatively little-used because of the lack of catalogue descriptions. However, she adds that they've made "great strides" to improve this throughout 2023.

Family historians researching the area remotely can achieve a great deal

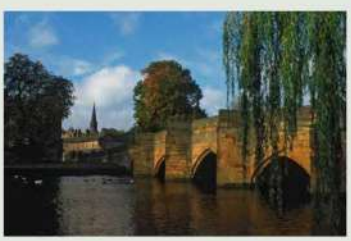
Manorial Records

The same is true of DRO's manorial records, which can be an invaluable source for anyone researching the time before the start of parish registers. Detailed administrative histories for each of the Derbyshire manors have been in the catalogue since 2022 and the documents are slowly being indexed, so users will be able to search the records for the name of a manor using the catalogue's 'Name Search' facility available at **calmview.derbyshire.gov.uk/CalmView/advanced.aspx?src=CalmView.Persons**.

One of the more popular collections held here is the probate books, which include copies of all wills proved at the Derby District Probate Registry between 1858 and 1928, as well as letters of administration granted up until 1875. You can search these via the catalogue's 'Advanced Search' function by entering someone's name into the 'Any Text' field, and D96/* in the 'Archive Reference/Library Class No.' field. There's a guide

Derbyshire Through The Ages **Historical highlights from the region**

1086
The Domesday Book records lead mining in Bakewell and Wirksworth.



c1300
Bakewell Bridge, a Grade I-listed stone arch bridge spanning the River Wye in Bakewell, is constructed.

1717
Norfolk-born siblings Thomas and John Lombe open the first successful silk-throwing mill in England on an island in the Derwent.

1792
Inventor and industrialist Sir Richard Arkwright dies in Cromford aged 59, after helping to make the area a centre of cotton production.

GETTY IMAGES

to searching for individuals on DRO's blog: **recordoffice.wordpress.com/2020/08/14/searching-for-people-in-the-catalogue/.**

DRO is full of evidence of local working lives. The archive holds records of engineering companies, such as Bryan Donkin of Chesterfield and the Butterley Company of Ripley, as well as Chesterfield textiles and packaging manufacturer Robinson and Sons.

Industry Collections

Of course Derbyshire is most associated with cotton mills and mining, and both industries are well represented in the county archive. There is material from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the National Coal Board (NCB) and many different colliery companies. In addition, DRO holds the records of the Barmoot (or Barmote) Courts – unique local courts that dealt with customs and disputes relating to the lead industry. Or there's the lead-mining account books for the Youlgreave/Bakewell area, for example, which record the 'lot' and 'cope' taxes charged to miners in the mid-19th century.

"The NCB papers were recently catalogued and we have several blog posts about the coal-mining records," Becky explains. "We also recently re-catalogued the business archives of cotton-spinners Messrs WG and J Strutt of Belper, which was situated in the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site."

These papers include evidence of children working in the factory, some as young as eight, as well as school records for the child workforce (1815–1900). DRO also holds wages books for Lumsdale Mills at Bakewell, owned by Arkwright, while volunteers are indexing recently acquired Strutt Mill ledgers.

Another valuable resource is Picture the Past (**picturethepast.org.uk**), which conserves the photographic heritage of the East Midlands. You can also explore more heritage highlights online via DRO's collection of 24 exhibitions at Google Arts & Culture (**artsandculture.google.com/partner/derbyshire-record-office**).

New arrivals at DRO since ▶

Free Online Records

Historic maps, details of war memorials, directories, parish registers, a school register, and prisoners' calendars from Derby Assizes are this month's resources

Assizes Records

w **tinyurl.com/derby-lib-prison**

The Derby Libraries website has a selection of digitised material, including calendars and sentences of prisoners at Derby Assizes between 1713 and 1881.

Directories

w **tinyurl.com/uni-leic-derb**

The University of Leicester's collection of digitised trade and street directories includes 18 volumes covering Derbyshire.

Parish Registers

w **freereg.org.uk**

FreeREG has 1.5 million baptism, marriage and burial transcriptions for Derbyshire. Also try FreeBMD (**freebmd.org.uk**) and FreeCEN (**freecen.org.uk**).

School Register

w **bit.ly/derby-school-register**

Visit the Internet Archive for a copy of *The Derby School Register, 1570–1901.*

War Memorials

w **derbyshirewarmemorials.com**

This ongoing project has transcribed more than 31,000 names recorded on over 2,000 war memorials across the county.

Historic Maps

w **tinyurl.com/dro-old-maps**

Via Derbyshire Record Office's Heritage Mapping Portal you can view a range of historic maps depicting the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

1822

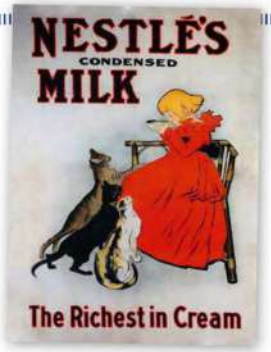
Francis Frith *(above)* is born in Chesterfield. He opens his first photographic studio in Liverpool in 1850.

1884

Derby County Football Club is established as an offshoot of Derbyshire County Cricket Club. Four years later it becomes one of the dozen founding members of the Football League.

1952

Hilary Mary Thompson is born in Glossop, later taking the surname of her stepfather Jack Mantel. Her novel about Thomas Cromwell *Wolf Hall* wins the Booker in 2009.



2003

After 90 years Nestlé shuts its factory in Ashbourne, which made evaporated and condensed milk.

2005

Whatstandwell-born sailor Ellen MacArthur makes a solo circuit of the Earth by boat in 71 days, setting a new world record.

GETTY IMAGES

Players tussle for the ball during a shrovetide football match in Ashbourne in 1926

▶ we last paid a visit include a collection donated by the Derby West Indian Community Association (**dwica.co.uk**), which was established around 60 years ago; new occupational records from the archives of Chesterfield tanner Joseph Clayton & Sons, including minutes, accounts and staff records (1934–2014); and account books dating back to 1715 from the Derby-based banking family, the Cromptons. These sit alongside newly arrived archives from schools in Allenton, Castleton, Ilkeston and Wirksworth, as well as records from parish and nonconformist churches, including Belper Methodist Circuit baptism registers (1857–1964).

TOP TIP!

The National Archives' Manorial Documents Register can help you find the county's surviving manorial records and go further back than parish registers: **tinyurl.com/mdr-derbys**.

The archivists are constantly making new discoveries too. In April last year the *Guardian* reported on the unearthing of the only surviving fragment of a textile with huge historical significance at DRO. The scrap of indigo woollen cloth was 240 years old, and identified as a fabric manufactured in Yorkshire that clothed millions of slaves.

"Although we had always been aware that it was in the collection, because it had been catalogued for decades, researchers discovered its existence and told us quite how rare it actually is," says Becky.

The Penistone cloth was bought in 1783 for enslaved people on the Turner's Hall sugar plantation in Barbados because, as noted on a handwritten slip of paper on the reverse, "for Substance Strength and unchangeable Colour, [it] is best adapted to that Purpose".

DRO has lists of names of slaves working here for 1759–1821, and during the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020 these were transcribed by volunteers working from home. You can read more about this work, and the tradition of imposing European names on slaves, via **recordoffice.wordpress.com/2023/10/31/slave-names/**. You can also uncover the history of the Turner's Hall plantation via the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery (**ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/538**).

LOCAL INDUSTRY

Cotton Did your Derbyshire relations work in the county's cotton mills?

Arkwright opened a cotton mill at Cromford in 1771

Sir Richard Arkwright pioneered water-powered mills at Bakewell, Cromford, Wirksworth and elsewhere in the Derwent Valley. Derwent Valley Mills is now a World Heritage Site and, per UNESCO, "an industrial landscape of high historical and technological interest". You can visit Arkwright's Masson Mills, home of a working textile museum (**massonmills.co.uk**), or take a tour of Strutt's Belper Mills complex (**belpernorthmill.org.uk/calendar**). The county archive's Strutt collection (1751–1938, reference D6948) has recently been re-catalogued; see **tinyurl.com/dro-cat-strutt** for details.

Derbyshire Surnames

Are any of these in your family tree?

BEARDSLEY
In 1881 there were 329 namesakes recorded in the Ilkeston census district alone.

BRENTNALL
Brentnall is a locative name associated with both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

DOXEY
This locative name comes from the village of Doxey in Seighford, across the border in Staffordshire.

ELSE
The district of Wirksworth in Derbyshire had the highest number of Elses in the 1881 census.

FEARN
Derbyshire contained the highest proportion of Fearn families recorded in the census of England and Wales in 1891.

LIMB
This name comes from a Middle English word for a piece of land bordering a river.

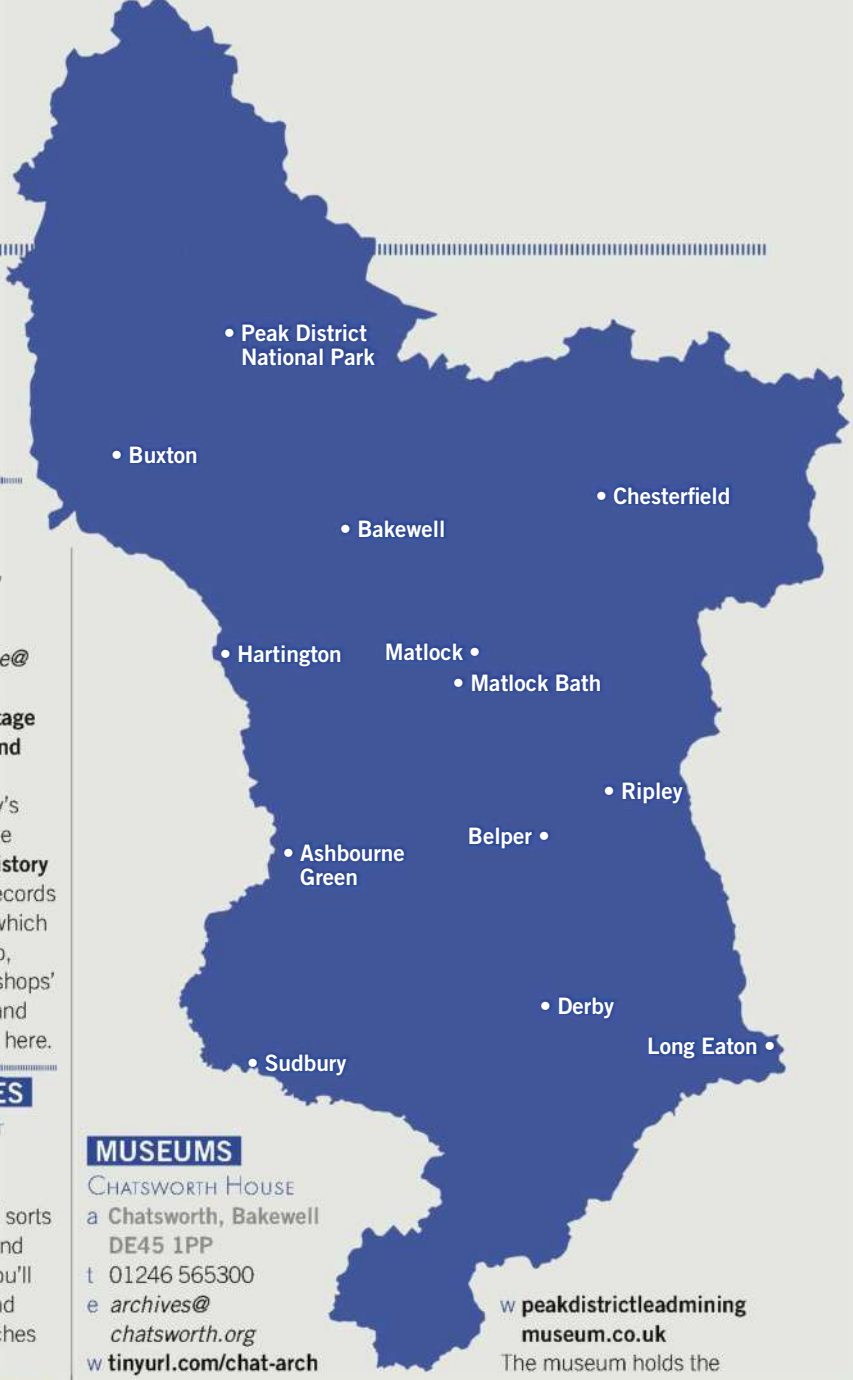
PLACKETT
Plackett is thought to be a locative name from a lost place in Derbyshire.

SEVERN
This locative name from the River Severn may also derive from the French personal name Séverin.

WHEATCROFT
The family name Wheatcroft is fairly widespread in both north and central England.

GETTY IMAGES

DIRECTORY



ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

Derbyshire Record Office

a **Derbyshire County Council, New Street, Matlock DE4 3FE**
t 01629 538347
e *record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk*
w **derbyshire.gov.uk/recordoffice**

The county archive holds parish registers, wills, Poor Law records, maps and plans; material relating to hospitals, workhouses, schools and the police; plus borough, petty-sessions and cemetery records (the oldest are from 1855). The record office is also home to the Derbyshire Local Studies Library. You can catch up on latest news via the blog at **recordoffice.wordpress.com**, search the catalogue at **calmview.derbyshire.gov.uk/CalmView/default.aspx** and view historic maps at the Heritage Mapping Portal: **tinyurl.com/dro-old-maps**.

Chesterfield Local Studies Library

a **New Beetwell Street, Chesterfield S40 1QN**
t 01629 533400
e *chesterfield.library@derbyshire.gov.uk*
w **derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/local-studies/local-studies-libraries/chesterfield-local-studies/chesterfield-local-studies-library.aspx**

Here you'll find material for Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire, alongside resources for the northern half of the county. On the website you can search a surname index to records compiled by Chesterfield and District Family History Society (see below), and download an index to births, marriages and deaths recorded in the *Derbyshire Times* (1900–1919).

Derby Local Studies And Family History Library

a **Riverside Chambers, Derby DE1 3AF**
t 01332 642240
e *localstudies.library@derby.gov.uk*
w **inderby.org.uk/libraries/our-libraries/derby-local-studies-and-family-history-library**

The library holds cemetery and crematorium records, electoral registers back to 1843, rate books, trade directories, maps, photos and local newspapers.

Staffordshire History Centre

a **Eastgate Street, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 2LZ**
t 01785 278379
e *staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk*
w **staffordshire.gov.uk/Heritage-and-Archives/Heritage-and-Archives.aspx**

The new home of the county's archives is due to open in the autumn (see **staffordshirehistorycentre.blog**). It looks after records for the Diocese of Lichfield which Derbyshire used to belong to, meaning that Derbyshire Bishops' Transcripts, pre-1858 wills and marriage licences are found here.

GROUPS & SOCIETIES

Chesterfield And District Family History Society

w **cadfhs.org**

The society's website has all sorts of guidance for beginners, and in the 'Resources' section you'll find case studies, articles and information relating to churches and places of worship.

Derbyshire Ancestral Research Group

w **tinyurl.com/fb-darg**

This informal group records memorial inscriptions in the county. Its holdings are listed at **darg.gukutils.org.uk**.

Derbyshire Family History Society

w **dfhs.org.uk**

In 2022 the society relocated to new headquarters at 95 Nottingham Road, Derby. The website has various free indexes, as well as material that is free to members; non-members can buy pay-as-you-go credits.

Derbyshire Record Society

w **derbyshirerecordsociety.org**

Established in 1977, the society publishes hardback books about the history of the county.

MUSEUMS

Chatsworth House

a **Chatsworth, Bakewell DE45 1PP**
t 01246 565300
e *archives@chatsworth.org*
w **tinyurl.com/chat-arch**

The seat of the Duke of Devonshire, the manor house holds an extensive archive that includes the personal papers of the Devonshire family plus estate and staff records.

Museum Of Making

a **Silk Mill Lane, Derby DE1 3AF**
t 01332 641901
e *info@derbymuseums.org*
w **derbymuseums.org/museum-of-making**

The museum opened in 2021 on the site of the Lombes' silk mill, and celebrates innovation, design and manufacturing.

Peak District Mining Museum

a **The Grand Pavilion, South Parade, Matlock Bath DE4 3NR**
t 01629 583834
e *mail@peakmines.co.uk*
w **peakdistrictleadmining museum.co.uk**

The museum holds the reference library of the Peak District Mines Historical Society (**pdmhs.co.uk**).

WEBSITES

Ancestry

w **ancestry.co.uk/search/places/united_kingdom/england/derbyshire/**

Here you can search more than 6.3 million births, marriages and deaths from the county.

Findmypast

w **findmypast.co.uk**

Findmypast has transcriptions from Derbyshire Family History Society, including nonconformist baptisms and parish registers.

Wirksworth Parish Records

w **wirksworth.org.uk**

Although untouched for over a decade, this old website is packed with useful information.

A housewife's diary, 1938–1941

Pamela Birch from Bedfordshire Archives shares a woman's diary from the Second World War

Interview By Rosemary Collins

During the Second World War, everyday life for millions of people around the world was turned upside down. In Britain, many of our ancestors faced hardship on the home front, from air raids and rationing to worries about family members fighting with the armed forces. Many ordinary people's experiences during the war are preserved in the accounts they left behind, via the Mass Observation Project (**massobservationproject.amdigital.co.uk**) and others.

Bedfordshire Archives holds the diary of one woman during the war – a housewife called Henrietta Argenti. County archivist Pamela Birch tells us more about what the diary reveals.

What Do We Know About Henrietta Argenti?

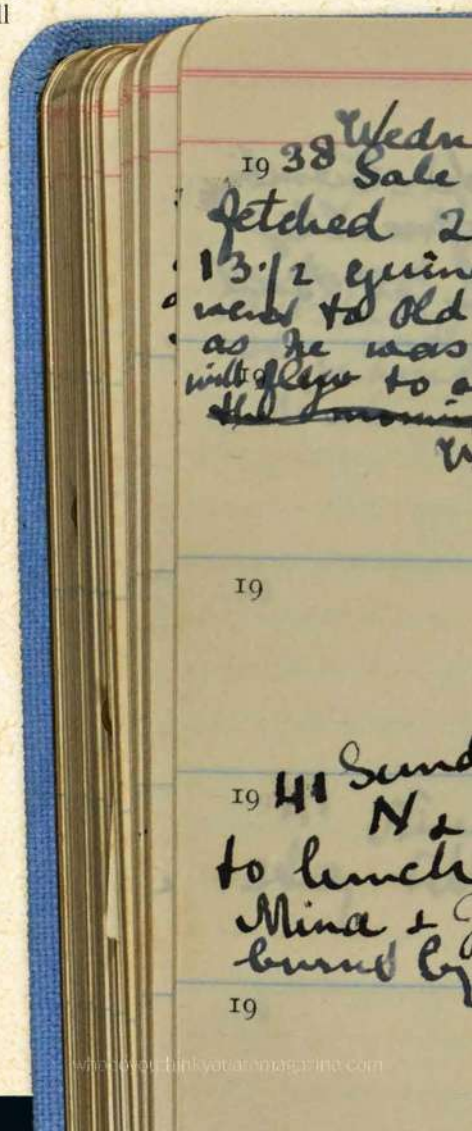
Henrietta lived in Pict's Hill, Turvey, Bedfordshire, with her husband Ambrose and their children Marigo, Virginia and Nicholas. They were part of the Chian diaspora descended from families who had left the Aegean island of Chios after the Ottoman massacre of 1822, during the Greek War of Independence (1821–1829). Ambrose and Henrietta's mutual ancestor, Leonidas Pandely Argenti, was one of those killed; his wife and children escaped.

After the war Chios remained in the Ottoman Empire, only joining the modern Greek state in 1912. The family were part of a network of wealthy Chian merchants spread around the globe. Ambrose was a member of the Baltic Exchange, a trade association for the maritime industry, and chaired the Commercial Union insurance company and the Ionian Bank.

Ambrose and Henrietta were cousins born in London in 1866 and 1867 respectively; they married in 1890. They kept a flat in London, but also rented a country home. In 1899 they rented the small Bedfordshire estate of Pict's Hill, and purchased the property in 1921. Nicholas married and moved away, but Ambrose, Henrietta, Marigo and 'Gina' remained living at Pict's Hill for the rest of their lives. Nicholas, a stockbroker by profession, was a captain in the British Army in the First World War, and a squadron leader in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. His mother and his sisters trained and worked as Voluntary Aid Detachment nurses. Henrietta died in 1942, Ambrose in 1952, Nicholas 1961, Marigo 1975 and Gina in 1981. Nicholas was survived by his children.

Can You Describe The Diary?

Henrietta's diary, catalogue reference X928/1/3/1/19, is one of many items written by the women of the family, which record daily activities, their household accounts and responsibilities. It is covered in pale blue cloth, and is about 5½ inches x 4½ inches when closed. It is a Walker's *Year by Year* book, covering five years. Each day has a dedicated page split into five sections, one for each year. Henrietta starts the diary in 1938, so 1938 is the top section of each page, 1939 the second section and so on. The last entry of note is on 20 December 1941 when Henrietta "went



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Bedfordshire Archives

a Riverside Building, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP
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e *archive@bedford.gov.uk*
w **bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/Archives-Service.aspx**

The archive preserves the documentary history of Bedfordshire and its people over 800 years. It is open 9.30am–1pm and 2pm–4.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Visits are by appointment only.

back to Pict's Hill from nursing home"; she died the following October.

Why Did You Choose It?

The diary is a fascinating mixture of entries about the family – their travels, entertainments, health and so on – with local, national and international news. It gives a glimpse into the world of this wealthy and well-connected family in a particularly momentous period. It indicates how Henrietta followed the war news, for example on 12 September 1938: "Chamberlain will fly to see Hitler. Tension great." Later she mentions evacuees from London; incendiary bombs dropped near Renhold; the introduction of rationing; and the Army occupying the smoking room, housekeeper's room and pump room at Pict's Hill as their officers' mess during manoeuvres at Turvey. Henrietta also mentions international events including the fall of Holland, Athens' occupation, and Germany declaring war on Russia.

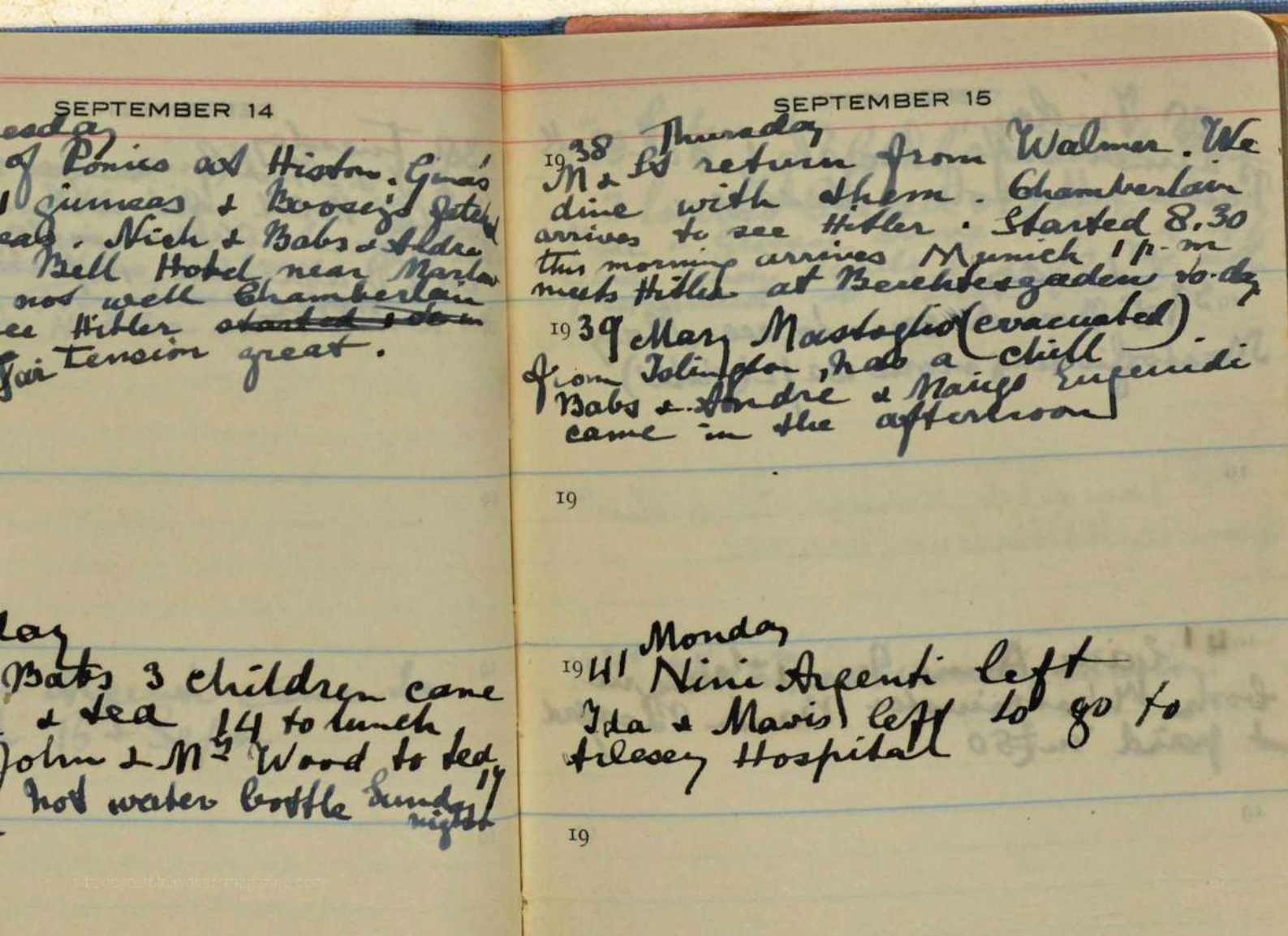
She reacts to the roles undertaken by her children. On 4 September 1939 she writes, "Marigo gone to Bromham House (hospital duty) 9–6 her first day"; and on 29 November 1941, "Nick reports at Loughborough Pilot Officer NA The Grove RAF Station Loughborough… Terrible blow to me." However, among all of this she is visiting the cinema and the theatre in London often, critiquing the performances. Sometimes these are unusual outings. On 20 June 1939 she "went to His Majesty's to see *Hamlet* in modern Greek. It was wonderfully well acted" and wrote the following day, "Invitation to meet Greek Co. of Theatre Royal Greece at His Majesty's Theatre after *Electra*". At other times she is seeing films that are now regarded as classics such as *Goodbye, Mr Chips* and *Dark Victory* with Bette Davis, both released in 1939.

There is also a lot of detail about health problems. For example Henrietta has all her teeth taken out, her husband is prescribed injections of concentrated liver extract for pernicious anaemia, and, in October 1941, Henrietta "noticed lump".

Reading the personal entries of this and other diaries sometimes feels rather intrusive, but as source material of an individual's lived experience it is invaluable and we are grateful to the family for depositing the papers with us. In fact this diary and other material in our collections written by women has been chosen to feature in a new digital resource *Women's Voices and Life Writing 1600–1968*, available online to academic institutions (**tinyurl.com/amdigital-wv**).

What Other Items Are In Your Collections?

As a county record office, Bedfordshire Archives has extensive holdings that include council minutes; church records; business records; estate records; photographs; and family papers. The collections are not all about the wealthy. We are just as interested in the records of the poor, and are working on a project with The National Archives to help make correspondence from Bedford Poor Law Union more accessible.



REVIEWS

The latest books on history and genealogy, plus apps, podcasts and websites

MARGINALISED ANCESTORS

A prostitute beating hemp in Bridewell Prison, London, as depicted by William Hogarth

Tracing Your Marginalised Ancestors

A Guide For Family Historians

Janet Few
Pen & Sword, 208 pages, £14.99

Many of us have disempowered ancestors in our family tree and it can be difficult to uncover information about their lives, because their paper trail is often limited. *Tracing Your Marginalised Ancestors* from regular *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* contributor Janet Few is a comprehensive and unique guide to discovering more about those individuals in the past who lived under the radar, due to social stigma, discrimination, intolerance or alienation.

Few's well-researched and sensitively written sourcebook discusses a wide range of thought-provoking and significant topics, including criminality; immigration and ethnicity; illegitimacy; and mental ill health, as well as the more unusual subjects of the Romany and Traveller community, and witchcraft. Within these areas, she also tackles complex and often emotive issues from the past, such as enslavement, abortion, suicide and sexuality.

The material is further enhanced by more general themes, such as the criminal-justice system, medical history, the impact of gender and class, and the role of religion in society. The author overturns myths and highlights common errors in these important areas of study, and offers ideas for further research.

Each chapter provides a detailed and informative overview of the context to the topic, including key links and sources. The explanations are clear and easy to understand, and the topics are supported by relevant and varied examples, including interesting case studies – many of which feature women's histories. There is a comprehensive list of further links and information at the end of the book. All in all, this is an invaluable guide and an excellent starting point for bringing your overlooked ancestors back from the margins and shining a light on their hidden and often tragic lives.

Angela Buckley is a crime historian. Her new book *The Bermondsey Murder: Scotland Yard's First Great Challenge and Dickens' Inspiration* (Pen & Sword) is published on 30 July

PUBLIC DOMAIN

DIGITAL PICKS

Rosemary Collins highlights three digital resources that caught our eye this month

WEBSITE

The Sankey Photography Archive

sankeyphotoarchive.uk

Edward Sankey and his sons Raymond and Eric were photographers from Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, who took more than 10,000 pictures of the town, charting everyday life from 1885 to the 1970s. This remarkable collection has now been published online. The images can be searched, or viewed in curated galleries such as 'Street scenes', 'Maritime' and 'Leisure'.

WATCH

Buried: How We Choose To Remember The Transatlantic Slave Trade

tinyurl.com/guardian-buried

In 2008, the remains of 325 formerly enslaved Africans were found on St Helena during the construction of an access road for an airport. Annina van Neel's 30-minute film, which can be viewed for free, follows the 14-year fight to have them reburied.

LISTEN

Sideways: The Keeper Of Lost Memories

tinyurl.com/bbc-snds-molm

In 2020, New Yorker David Gutenmacher started the Museum of Lost Memories. He buys old family photos and videos in secondhand shops, and reunites them with their original owners via social media. In this episode of Radio 4's *Sideways*, Matthew Syed interviews David and considers the impact of smartphone photography on the way we remember things.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

A Dirty, Filthy Book

Sex, Scandal, And One Woman's Fight In The Victorian Trial Of The Century

SOCIAL HISTORY

Michael Meyer
WH Allen, 400 pages, £25

The first biography of activist and campaigner Annie Besant (1847–1933) in 50 years describes her 1877 battle in London courts after being charged with printing and selling an obscene book, alongside her co-publisher Charles Bradlaugh. The title in question was a reprint of Dr Charles Knowlton's *Fruits of Philosophy*, written nearly 40 years previously in the USA, which promoted birth control.

Besant's fight for civil liberties and women's rights had begun some years earlier. After an abusive marriage, she had left her husband Frank with a small sum "sufficient for respectable starvation". She took Mabel, their daughter, with her, while he kept their son Arthur. She met Bradlaugh at a National Secular Society meeting. He threw her a lifeline by employing her on his journal the *National Reformer* at a guinea a week.

Although the pair were found guilty, the court could not find any previous examples of punishment of such a crime and the sentences were thrown out, but the book had become a bestseller.

The worst was to come for Besant when her husband took Mabel away as a result of the case.

It's worth remembering too that your female ancestors might have been cheering Besant on for championing the right for women to have access to medical knowledge about birth control.

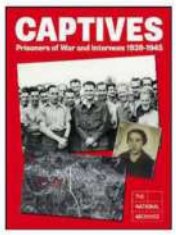
Julie Peakman is a historian. She tells the story of prostitution in 17th-century London on page 54

Reader Review YOUR CHANCE TO ASSESS THE LATEST BOOKS

Captives Prisoners Of War And Internees 1939–1945

William Butler, Ela Kaczmarska And Roger Kershaw
The History Press, 144 pages, £17.99

WW2



Captives accompanies 'Great Escapes', an exhibition at The National Archives (TNA) in Kew that runs until 21 July (**nationalarchives.gov.uk/great-escapes**).

The book highlights incredible stories and histories of prisoners of war and civilians who were confined in internment camps, some of them well known. I particularly enjoyed reading about the 'Great Escape' of Allied prisoners from Stalag Luft III and British officer Airey Neave's escape from Colditz Castle, and how it was possible to survive mentally and physically in captivity by using art and theatre.

Captives includes many photographs of the individuals involved, plus letters, maps and plans. My only problem is the size at which the documents are reproduced. I could only read the text on crucial images by enlarging it using the magnifier on my smartphone. Over time it became tedious, which is a shame.

At the back of the book is an appendix "Help with your own research", giving such useful information as the relevant records held at TNA and their reference numbers in its catalogue. A great companion to the exhibition.

This photograph of internees in the grounds of Ilag VIII/H, Tost, Upper Silesia, was taken in 1941

Rosemary Wilmot, Evesham
Rosemary has been researching her family tree for the past 44 years

Join Us... Send us an email if you'd like to join our reviewing panel e *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Rosemary wrote the Reader Review in January 213

TV & RADIO

Jonathan Wright previews upcoming programmes on history and family history

D-Day: The Unheard Tapes

BBC Two and BBC iPlayer
Early June

British engineers explore ruins to clear away mines and booby traps after the Battle for Caen, 1944

On 6 June, it will be 80 years to the day since about 156,000 Allied troops landed at Normandy on D-Day. In 1944, the western invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe had begun, a story often told as a grand narrative of strategic decisions.

But of course most of those who lived through that day in northern France would have been unaware of the machinations of generals and political leaders. Nevertheless, their stories and insights are no less valuable to understanding what happened. Especially when, as in this three-part series, we hear the reflections of those who experienced the longest day as it played out, remembering the momentous hours when they were uncertain whether the Allies would succeed in establishing beachheads on the Continent – and whether they would personally survive to see the dawn.

From *Who Do You Think You Are?* production company Wall to Wall, and made in partnership with The Open University and Imperial War Museums, *D-Day: The Unheard Tapes* draws on interviews with both Allied and German troops, and with French eyewitnesses too. The audio material has been sourced from museums, university archives and private collections, and many of the interviews have never previously been digitised or made public.

Similarly to the BAFTA-nominated *AIDS: The Unheard Tapes* (2022), also produced by Wall to Wall, the words of those who were there are lip-synched by young actors filmed in costume. When combined with archival footage, it's an approach that gives new life to the testimony as we hear stories of courage, fear and the kind of split-second decision-making on which lives can turn.

"D-Day didn't happen in black and white, nor was it a one-sided tale of Allied genius," said Simon Young, head of history, BBC Factual Commissioning, when the series was first announced. "By bringing the events of that day to life with real words recast as interview testimony, this series brings us closer to those men and women who lived through it."

Young added that we can expect more BBC programmes to commemorate the final months of the Second World War, although details had yet to be announced as the magazine went to press.

• Turn to page 14 to read Gavin Mortimer's account of D-Day and tips for key records.

Archive On 4: Watching Us, Watching You

BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds
Saturday 25 May

The BBC Community Programme Unit was established in 1972 to help members of the public produce shows to be broadcast nationally. Here journalist and broadcaster Ellen E Jones looks back at its creation and considers the question, "Was this the original YouTube?"

Canal Boat Diaries

Yesterday and UKTV Play
June

Many of us are drawn to the romance of living aboard a canal boat, free to move to new locales on a whim but travelling slowly, liberated from the stress of modern life. Robbie Cumming has followed this dream and documented his experiences as skipper of the narrowboat *Naughty Lass* via YouTube and, latterly, on TV too.

The fifth series of Cumming's *Canal Boat Diaries*, the first made for Yesterday rather than BBC Four, finds him exploring the urban waterways of the West Midlands as he heads from Braunston in Northamptonshire, where the Grand Union and Oxford Canals meet, to the Anglesey Basin, the northernmost point of the Birmingham Canal Navigations system.

Although the network is now associated with leisure, Britain's canals were built to drive industry. Once, Birmingham's waterways were so busy that gas-lighting was installed so that locks could be used through the night. Things may be quieter now, but Cumming sees plenty of reminders of Britain's industrial heritage on his travels.

As well as capturing the sense of freedom that comes from a life on the water, the series also shows its difficulties, as when *Naughty Lass* hits a bridge on the Bumble Hole Branch Canal, or when, with the assistance of his brother Charlie, Cumming tackles Wolverhampton's forbidding flight of 21 narrow locks.

Long Lost Family: Born Without Trace

ITV and ITVX
June (TBC)

Although an exact transmission date was still to be finalised at time of writing, new episodes of *Long Lost Family: Born Without Trace*, produced by Wall to Wall, should reach screens this summer. Once again, the series explores the stories of those abandoned as babies and, inevitably, left with questions about why this happened.

One of the programmes, for example, follows the story of a foundling left in the waiting room of a train station 50 years ago. The episode ultimately reveals the identity of two different unmarried mothers who felt unable to bring their children home.

As ever, Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell present the series, while lead social worker Ariel Bruce and her team employ genealogical research, DNA analysis and sheer hard work as they delve into the past. In addition to six new searches, look out for a special episode of the spin-off *Born Without Trace: What Happened Next?*.

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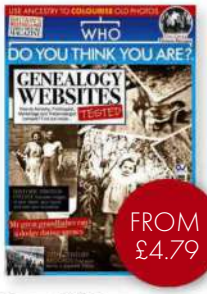

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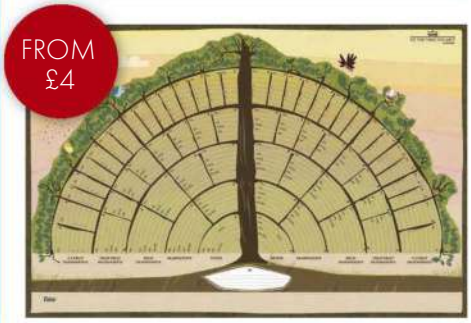

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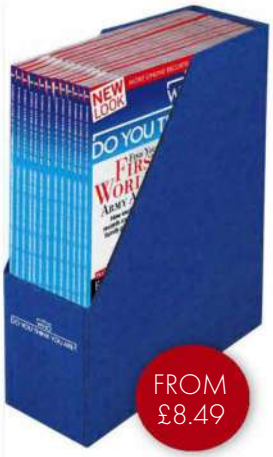

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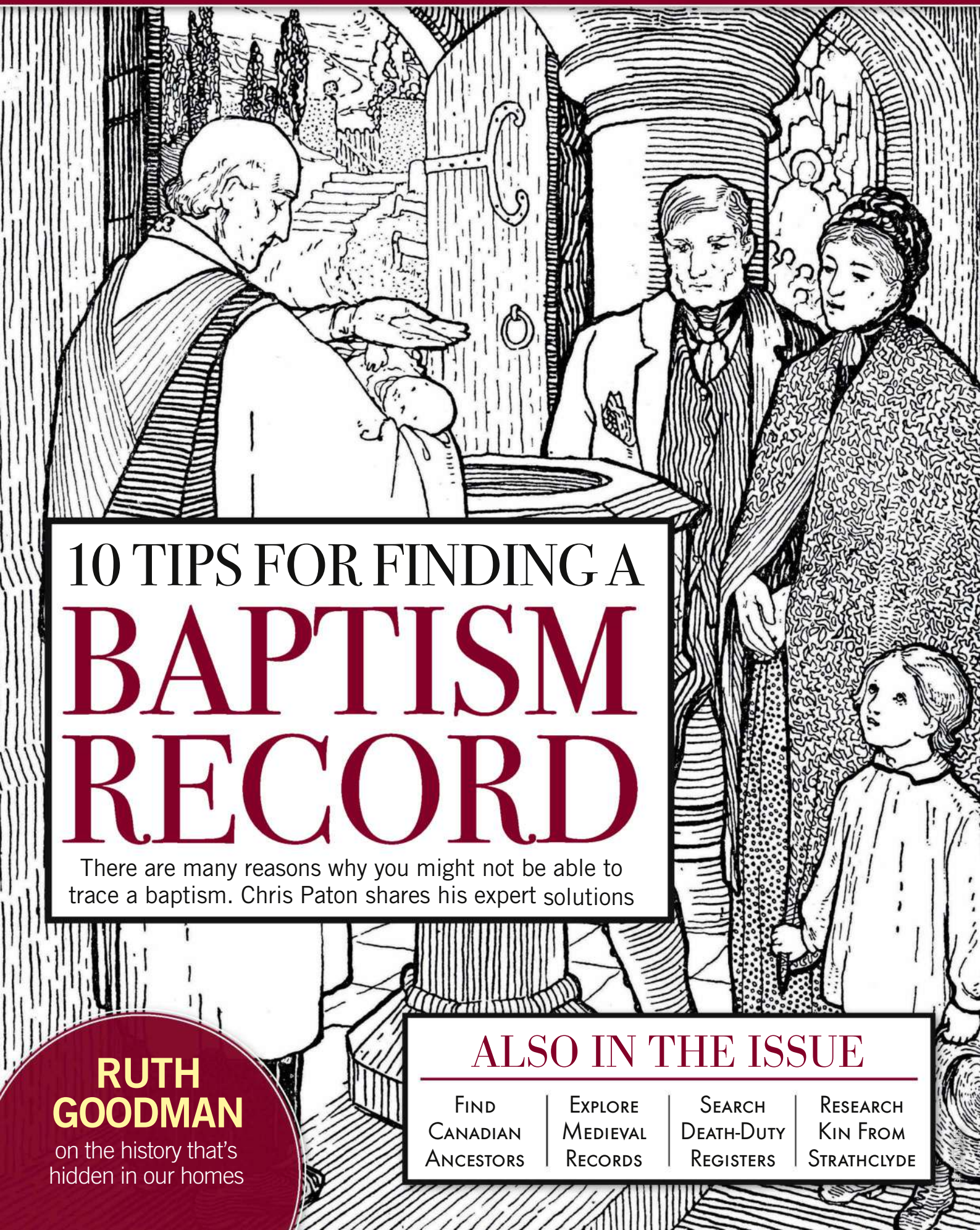

10 TIPS FOR FINDING A BAPTISM RECORD

There are many reasons why you might not be able to trace a baptism. Chris Paton shares his expert solutions

RUTH GOODMAN
on the history that's hidden in our homes

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- Find Canadian Ancestors
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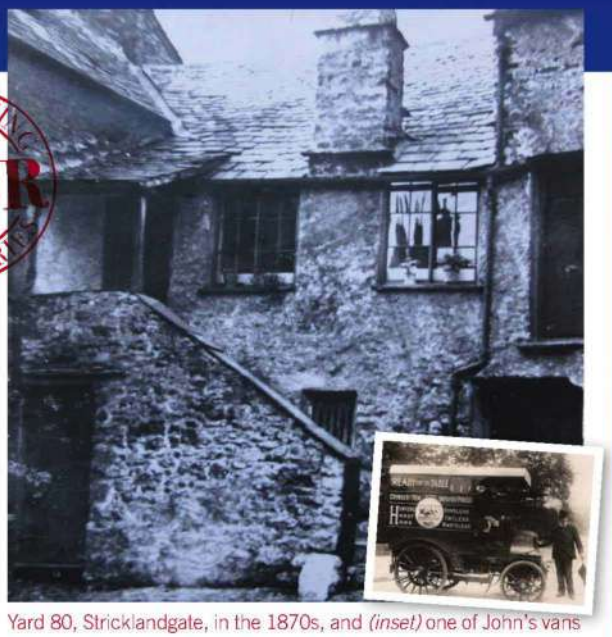
'Elizabeth Must Have Been An Amazing Mother'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Ann Anderson's great great grandmother raised her son single-handedly in a Cumbrian back street. He would go on to live in a mansion, says **Gail Dixon**



Yard 80, Stricklandgate, in the 1870s, and *(inset)* one of John's vans

Ann Anderson's relatives went from poverty to enormous wealth in just one generation. How did they achieve such a change of fortune in Victorian times? Ann would credit much of the success to her doughty great great grandmother Elizabeth Airey.

"My mother Phyllis loved to tell me family stories when I was growing up," Ann explains. "She was very proud of her working-class great grandmother Elizabeth, whose son established a huge ham business."

Elizabeth was born in 1816 in the village of Skelsmergh, a few miles north of Kendal in Cumbria. Her parents Thomas and Sarah ran a small hilltop farm.

"Elizabeth worked in Kendal as a servant for the Dixon family, who were grocers. At the age of 20, she was baptised into the Inghamite Chapel of which they were members." The Inghamite sect had broken off from the Moravian Church, one of the oldest Protestant denominations.

From the Inghamite register in Kendal Library, Ann discovered that Elizabeth stayed with the Dixons for 10 years. In 1853, she married saddler William Hunter and a year later their son John Airey Hunter was born.

"Sadly, William died of tuberculosis and typhoid fever in 1855, leaving Elizabeth on her own with a toddler. She wanted to keep John with her, so she worked as a laundress to support them.

"Family members have told me that Elizabeth was a tough little person dressed in widow's black." Ann's great great grandmother stayed single throughout her life, and must have worked incredibly hard to raise her son. They lived at No. 5, Yard 80, Stricklandgate, central Kendal, amidst a cluster of 'tumbledown' cottages.

"John became a grocer's boy in his early teens," she adds. "My guess is that Elizabeth didn't want him to labour outdoors, as his father had done, so perhaps her former employers helped him to find some work."

Elizabeth was a strong, consistent, supportive woman

By 1881, John was a prospering grocer and provisions dealer in his own right, living in Kendal with his wife Alice Wiggins. They had five children, including Ann's grandmother Alice Maud.

John had started a small business in Kendal specialising in cured ham. Demand was high, so he established a factory in the town where they produced boneless canned meat – a convenient choice for busy Victorian housewives. The company also branched out into cheese and pickles.

'Hunter's Handy Hams', as it was known, flourished and by the 1891 census he was living in Southport, Merseyside, in a large house with two servants. John had acquired a bigger factory in Bootle, Merseyside, because his tinned ham was so popular.

"I was horrified to see his mother, aged 75 in the 1891 census, living as a lodger in Kendal, but she was staying with the Wiggins family, who were John's in-laws. The house was opposite Elizabeth's beloved Inghamite Chapel, which was up a steep hill. This gave her easy access to it."

Hunter's Handy Hams continued to thrive well into the 20th century, winning awards for its produce. "In 1933, the trade journal *The Grocer* attributed the company's success to quality products, reasonable pricing and 'the close bond of union that has at all times existed between directors, officials and all employees'. John was an enlightened employer, which speaks volumes of his personality and the influence of his mother."

After Alice's death in 1908, John remarried to Cecilia Hughes and lived at Tandridge Hall in Surrey. He died in 1922 on the French Riviera, and left most of his estate to Cecilia.

Elizabeth continued to live modestly in Kendal, where she died in 1892 at the age of 76. "She is my family hero because she was a strong, consistent, supportive woman, whose early life was so tragic."

ANN ANDERSON
lives in London and is a retired further-education teacher. She has been researching her family tree since the 1970s

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A generation ago, a woman named Sylvia made a promise. As a doctor's secretary, she'd watched stroke destroy the lives of so many people. She was determined to make sure we could all live in a world where we're far less likely to lose our lives to stroke.

She kept her promise, and a gift to the Stroke Association was included in her Will. Sylvia's gift helped fund the work that made sure many more of us survive stroke now than did in her lifetime.

Sylvia changed the story for us all. Now it's our turn to change the story for those who'll come after us.

Stroke still shatters lives and tears families apart. And for so many survivors the road to recovery is still long and desperately lonely. If you or someone you love has been affected by stroke – you'll know just what that means.

But it doesn't have to be like this. You can change the story, just like Sylvia did, with a gift in your Will. All it takes is a promise.

You can promise future generations a world where researchers discover new treatments and surgeries and every single stroke survivor has the best care, rehabilitation and support network possible, to help them rebuild their lives.

Big or small, every legacy gift left to the Stroke Association will make a difference to stroke survivors and their families.

Find out how by calling 020 7566 1505

or email legacy@stroke.org.uk

or visit stroke.org.uk/legacy

Rebuilding lives after stroke

The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789).
Also registered in the Isle of Man (No. 945) and Jersey (NPO 369), and operating as a charity in Northern Ireland.

Stroke Association